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(Sections 45 to 59)

Translated by
BIBEK DEBROY

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Contents

About the Translator

Bibek Debroy is an economist and is Research Professor (Centre of Policy Research) and a columnist with *Economic Times*. He has worked in universities, research institutes, industry and for the government. He has published books, papers and popular articles in economics. But he has also published in Indology and translated (into English) the Vedas, the Puranas, the Upanishads and the Gita (Penguin India, 2005). His book *Sarama and her Children: The Dog in Indian Myth* (Penguin India, 2008) splices his interest in Hinduism with his love for dogs. He is currently translating the remaining volumes of the unabridged Mahabharata.

'The modernization of language is visible, it's easier on the mind, through expressions that are somewhat familiar. The detailing of the story is intact, the varying tempo maintained, with no deviations from the original. The short introduction reflects a brilliant mind. For those who passionately love the Mahabharata and want to explore it to its depths, Debroy's translation offers great promise in the first volume.'

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‘The brilliance of Ved Vysya comes through [in Volume 3], ably translated by Bibek Debroy.’

—*Hindustan Times*

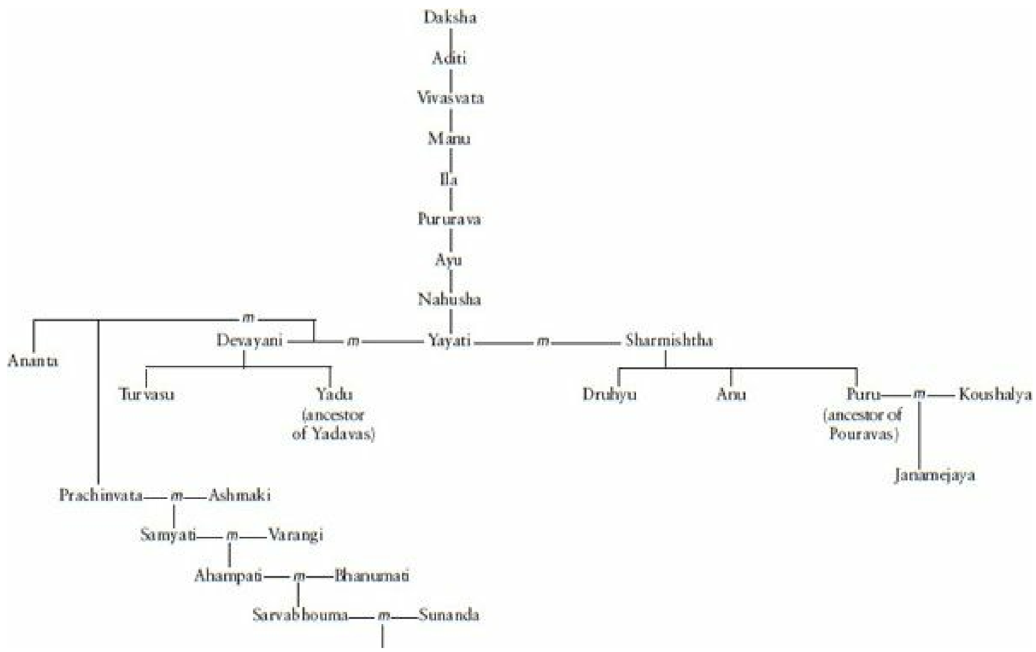
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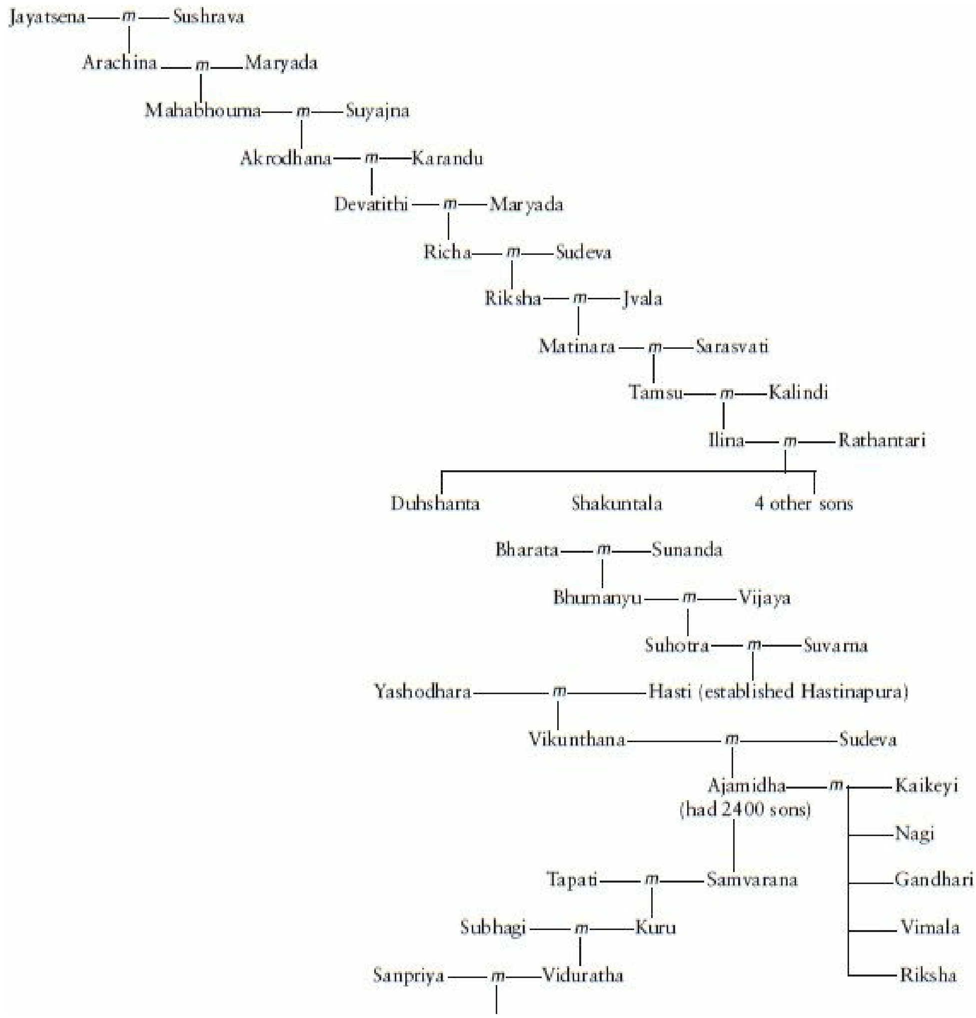
Ardha bhāryā manuṣyasya bhāryā śreṣṭhatamaḥ sakhā
Bhāryā mulam trivargasya bhāryā mitram mariṣyataḥ

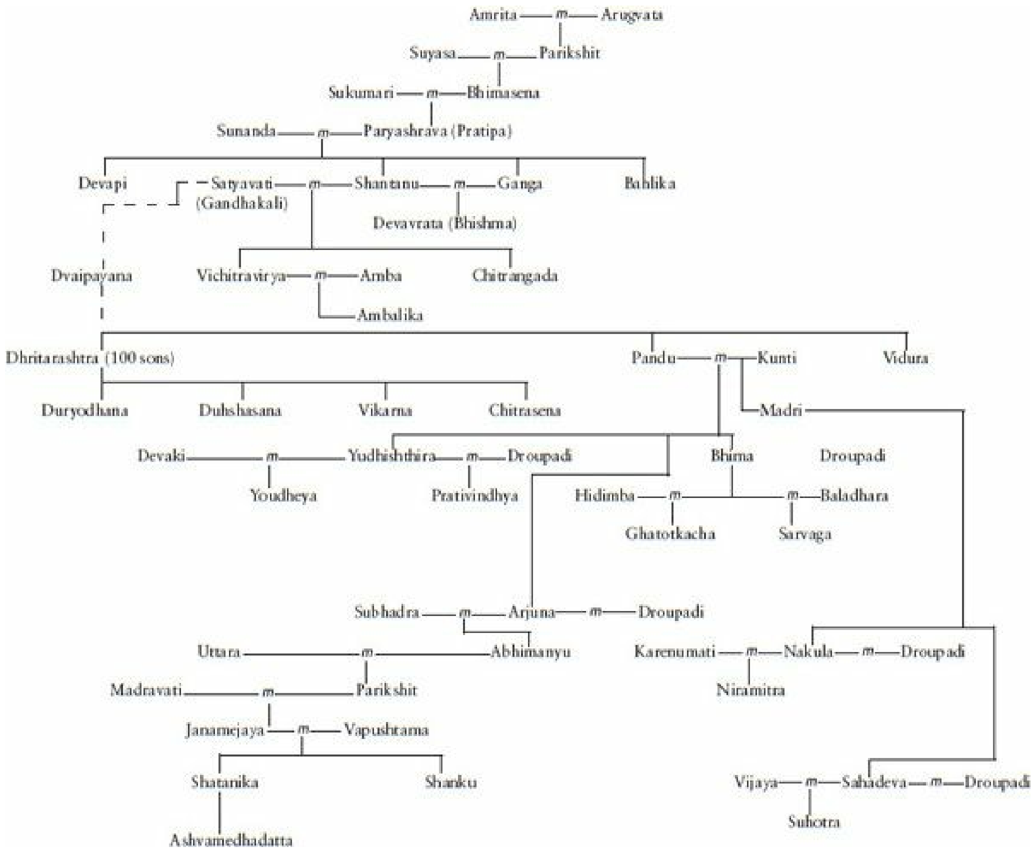
Mahabharata (1/68/40)

Family Tree

Bharata/Puru Lineage

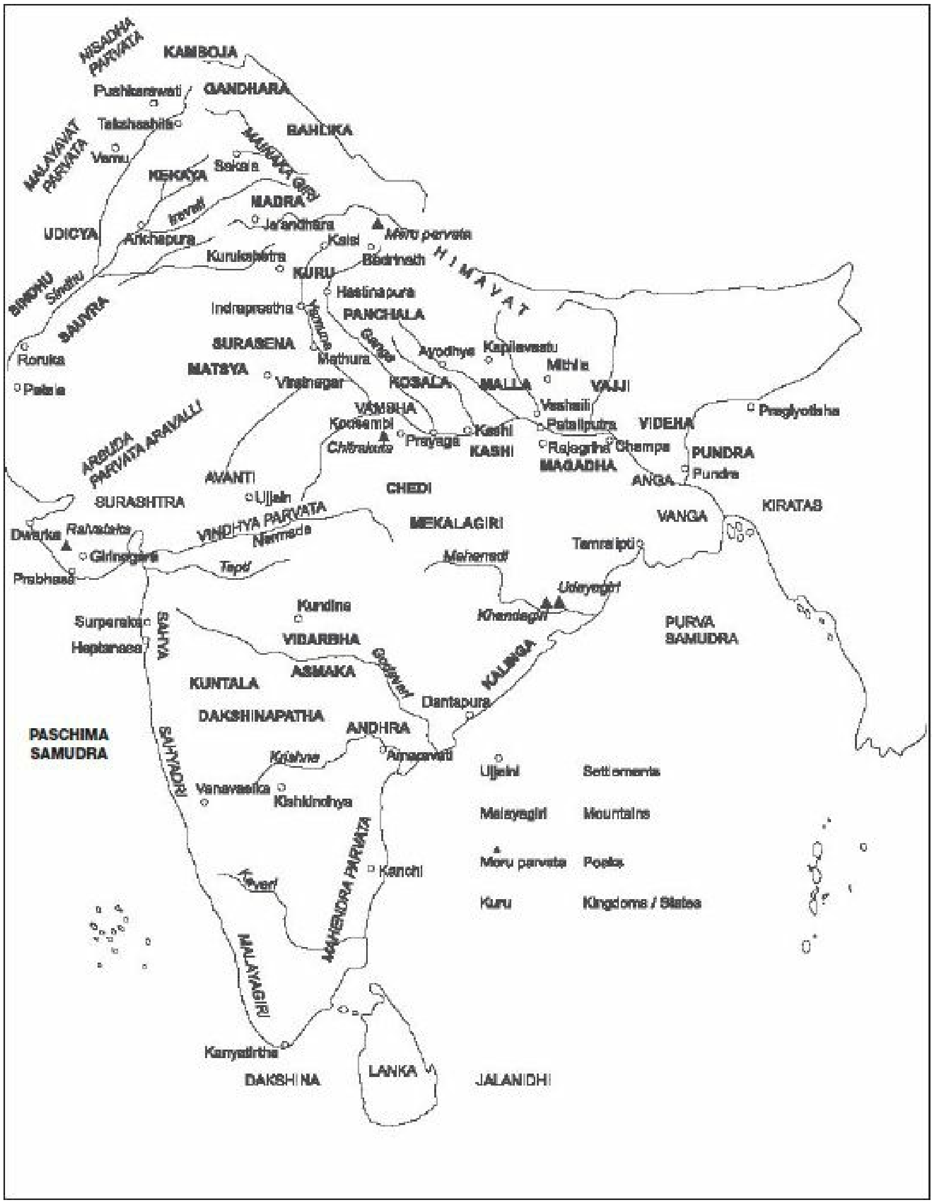



Jayatsena — m — Sushrava
Arachina — m — Maryada
Mahabhouma — m — Suyajna
Akrodhana — m — Karandu
Devatithi — m — Maryada
Richa — m — Sudeva
Riksha — m — Jvala
Matinara — m — Sarasvati
Tamsu — m — Kalindi
Ilina — m — Rathantari
Duhshanta
Shakuntala
4 other sons
Bharata — m — Sunanda
Bhumanyu — m — Vijaya
Suhotra — m — Suvarna
Yashodhara — m — Hasti (established Hastinapura)
Vikunthana — m — Sudeva
Ajamidha — m — Kaikeyi
(had 2400 sons)
Nagi
Gandhari
Vimala
Riksha
Tapati — m — Samvarana
Subhagi — m — Kuru
Sanpriya — m — Viduratha


Amrita — m — Arugvata
Suyasa — m — Parikshit
Sukumari — m — Bhimasena
Sunanda — m — Paryashrava (Pratipa)
Devapi
Satyavati (Gandhakali) — m — Shantanu — m — Ganga
Bahlika
Devavrata (Bhishma)
Dvaipayana
Vichitravirya — m — Amba
Ambalika
Chitrangada
Dhritarashtra (100 sons)
Pandu — m — Kunti
Madri
Vidura
Duryodhana
Duhshasana
Vikarna
Chitrasena
Devaki — m — Yudhishthira — m — Droupadi
Youdheya
Prativindhya
Bhima
Droupadi
Hidimba — m
m — Baladhara
Ghatotkacha
Sarvaga
Subhadra — m — Arjuna — m — Droupadi
Uttara — m — Abhimanyu
Madravati — m — Parikshit
Janamejaya — m — Vapushtama
Shatanika
Shanku
Ashvamedhadatta
Karenumati — m — Nakula — m — Droupadi
Niramitra
Vijaya — m — Sahadeva — m — Droupadi
Suhotra

Map of Bharatavarsha

BHARATAVARSHA (SIXTH CENTURY BCE)



Introduction

The Hindu tradition has an amazingly large corpus of religious texts, spanning Vedas, Vedanta (*brahmanas*,[1] *aranyakas*,[2] Upanishads,), Vedangas,[3] *smritis*, Puranas, dharmashastras and *itihasa*. For most of these texts, especially if one excludes classical Sanskrit literature, we don't quite know when they were composed and by whom, not that one is looking for single authors. Some of the minor Puranas (Upa Purana) are of later vintage. For instance, the Bhavishya Purana (which is often listed as a major Purana or Maha Purana) mentions Queen Victoria.

In the listing of the corpus above figures itihasa, translated into English as history. History doesn't entirely capture the nuance of itihasa, which is better translated as 'this is indeed what happened'. Itihasa isn't myth or fiction. It is a chronicle of what happened; it is fact. Or so runs the belief. And itihasa consists of India's two major epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The former is believed to have been composed as poetry and the latter as prose. This isn't quite correct. The Ramayana has segments in prose and the Mahabharata has segments in poetry. Itihasa doesn't quite belong to the category of religious texts in a way that the Vedas and Vedanta are religious. However, the dividing line between what is religious and what is not is fuzzy. After all, itihasa is also about attaining the objectives of *dharma*,[4] *artha*,[5] *kama*[6] and *moksha*[7] and the Mahabharata includes Hinduism's most important spiritual text—the Bhagavad Gita.

The epics are not part of the *shruti* tradition. That tradition is like revelation, without any composer. The epics are part of the *smriti* tradition. At the time they were composed, there was no question of texts being written down. They were recited, heard, memorized and passed down through the generations. But the smriti tradition had composers. The Ramayana was composed by Valmiki, regarded as the first poet or *kavi*. The word kavi has a secondary meaning as poet or rhymer. The primary meaning of kavi is someone who is wise. And in that sense, the composer of the Mahabharata was no less wise. This was Vedavyasa or Vyasadeva. He was so named because he classified (*vyasa*) the Vedas. Vedavyasa or Vyasadeva isn't a proper name. It is a title. Once in a while, in accordance with the needs of the era, the Vedas need to be classified. Each such person obtains the title and there have been twenty-eight Vyasadevas so far.

At one level, the question about who composed the Mahabharata is pointless. According to popular belief and according to what the Mahabharata itself states, it was composed by Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa (Vyasadeva). But the text was not composed and cast in stone at a single point in time. Multiple authors kept adding layers and embellishing it. Sections just kept getting added and it is no one's suggestion that Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa composed the text of the Mahabharata as it stands

today.

Consequently, the Mahabharata is far more unstructured than the Ramayana. The major sections of the Ramayana are known as *kanda*s and one meaning of the word kanda is the stem or trunk of a tree, suggesting solidity. The major sections of the Mahabharata are known as *parva*s and while one meaning of the word parva is limb or member or joint, in its nuance there is greater fluidity in the word parva than in kanda.

The Vyasadeva we are concerned with had a proper name of Krishna Dvaipayana. He was born on an island (*dvipa*). That explains the Dvaipayana part of the name. He was dark. That explains the Krishna part of the name. (It wasn't only the incarnation of Vishnu who had the name of Krishna.) Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa was also related to the protagonists of the Mahabharata story. To go back to the origins, the Ramayana is about the solar dynasty, while the Mahabharata is about the lunar dynasty. As is to be expected, the lunar dynasty begins with Soma (the moon) and goes down through Pururava (who married the famous apsara Urvashi), Nahusha and Yayati. Yayati became old, but wasn't ready to give up the pleasures of life. He asked his sons to temporarily loan him their youth. All but one refused. The ones who refused were cursed that they would never be kings, and this includes the Yadavas (descended from Yadu). The one who agreed was Puru and the lunar dynasty continued through him. Puru's son Duhshanta was made famous by Kalidasa in the Duhshanta–Shakuntala story and their son was Bharata, contributing to the name of Bharatavarsha. Bharata's grandson was Kuru. We often tend to think of the Kouravas as the evil protagonists in the Mahabharata story and the Pandavas as the good protagonists. Since Kuru was a common ancestor, the appellation Kourava applies equally to Yudhishthira and his brothers and Duryodhana and his brothers. Kuru's grandson was Shantanu. Through Satyavati, Shantanu fathered Chitrangada and Vichitravirya. However, the sage Parashara had already fathered Krishna Dvaipayana through Satyavati. And Shantanu had already fathered Bhishma through Ganga. Dhritarasthra and Pandu were fathered on Vichitravirya's wives by Krishna Dvaipayana.

The story of the epic is also about these antecedents and consequents. The core Mahabharata story is known to every Indian and is normally understood as a dispute between the Kouravas (descended from Dhritarashtra) and the Pandavas (descended from Pandu). However, this is a distilled version, which really begins with Shantanu. The non-distilled version takes us to the roots of the genealogical tree and at several points along this tree we confront a problem with impotence/sterility/death, resulting in offspring through a surrogate father. Such sons were accepted in that day and age. Nor was this a lunar dynasty problem alone. In the Ramayana, Dasharatha of the solar dynasty also had an infertility problem, corrected through a sacrifice. To return to the genealogical tree, the Pandavas won the Kurukshetra war. However, their five sons through Droupadi were killed. So was Bhima's son Ghatotkacha, fathered on Hidimba.

As was Arjuna's son Abhimanyu, fathered on Subhadra. Abhimanyu's son Parikshit inherited the throne in Hastinapura, but was killed by a serpent. Parikshit's son was Janamejaya.

Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa's powers of composition were remarkable. Having classified the Vedas, he composed the Mahabharata in 100,000 shlokas or couplets. Today's Mahabharata text doesn't have that many shlokas, even if the Hari Vamsha (regarded as the epilogue to the Mahabharata) is included. One reaches around 90,000 shlokas. That too, is a gigantic number. (The Mahabharata is almost four times the size of the Ramayana and is longer than any other epic anywhere in the world.) For a count of 90,000 Sanskrit shlokas, we are talking about something in the neighbourhood of two million words. The text of the Mahabharata tells us that Krishna Dvaipayana finished this composition in three years. This doesn't necessarily mean that he composed 90,000 shlokas. The text also tells us that there are three versions to the Mahabharata. The original version was called Jaya and had 8,800 shlokas. This was expanded to 24,000 shlokas and called Bharata. Finally, it was expanded to 90,000 (or 100,000) shlokas and called Mahabharata.

Krishna Dvaipayana didn't rest even after that. He composed the eighteen Maha Puranas, adding another 400,000 shlokas. Having composed the Mahabharata, he taught it to his disciple Vaishampayana. When Parikshit was killed by a serpent, Janamejaya organized a snake-sacrifice to destroy the serpents. With all the sages assembled there, Vaishampayana turned up and the assembled sages wanted to know the story of the Mahabharata, as composed by Krishna Dvaipayana. Janamejaya also wanted to know why Parikshit had been killed by the serpent. That's the background against which the epic is recited. However, there is another round of recounting too. Much later, the sages assembled for a sacrifice in Naimisharanya and asked Lomaharshana (alternatively, Romaharshana) to recite what he had heard at Janamejaya's snake-sacrifice. Lomaharshana was a *suta*, the sutas being charioteers and bards or raconteurs. As the son of a suta, Lomaharshana is also referred to as Souti. But Souti or Lomaharshana aren't quite his proper names. His proper name is Ugrashrava. Souti refers to his birth. He owes the name Lomaharshana to the fact that the body-hair (*loma* or *roma*) stood up (*harshana*) on hearing his tales. Within the text therefore, two people are telling the tale. Sometimes it is Vaishampayana and sometimes it is Lomaharshana. Incidentally, the stories of the Puranas are recounted by Lomaharshana, without Vaishampayana intruding. Having composed the Puranas, Krishna Dvaipayana taught them to his disciple Lomaharshana. For what it is worth, there are scholars who have used statistical tests to try and identify the multiple authors of the Mahabharata.

As we are certain there were multiple authors rather than a single one, the question of when the Mahabharata was composed is somewhat pointless. It wasn't composed on a single date. It was composed over a span of more than 1000 years, perhaps between

800 BCE and 400 ACE. It is impossible to be more accurate than that. There is a difference between dating the composition and dating the incidents, such as the date of the Kurukshetra war. Dating the incidents is both subjective and controversial and irrelevant for the purposes of this translation. A timeline of 1000 years isn't short. But even then, the size of the corpus is nothing short of amazing.

Familiarity with Sanskrit is dying out. The first decades of the twenty-first century are quite unlike the first decades of the twentieth. Lamentation over what is inevitable serves no purpose. English is increasingly becoming the global language, courtesy colonies (North America, South Asia, East Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Africa) rather than the former colonizer. If familiarity with the corpus is not to die out, it needs to be accessible in English.

There are many different versions or recensions of the Mahabharata. However, between 1919 and 1966, the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI) in Pune produced what has come to be known as the critical edition. This is an authenticated text produced by a board of scholars and seeks to eliminate later interpolations, unifying the text across the various regional versions. This is the text followed in this translation. One should also mention that the critical edition's text is not invariably smooth. Sometimes, the transition from one shloka to another is abrupt, because the intervening shloka has been weeded out. With the intervening shloka included, a non-critical version of the text sometimes makes better sense. On a few occasions, I have had the temerity to point this out in the notes which I have included in my translation.

It took a long time for this critical edition to be put together. The exercise began in 1919. Without the Hari Vamsha, the complete critical edition became available in 1966. And with the Hari Vamsha, the complete critical edition became available in 1970. Before this, there were regional variations in the text and the main versions were available from Bengal, Bombay and the south. However, now, one should stick to the critical edition, though there are occasional instances where there are reasons for dissatisfaction with what the scholars of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute have accomplished. But in all fairness, there are two published versions of the critical edition. The first one has the bare bones of the critical edition's text. The second has all the regional versions collated, with copious notes. The former is for the ordinary reader, assuming he/she knows Sanskrit. And the latter is for the scholar. Consequently, some popular beliefs no longer find a place in the critical edition's text. For example, it is believed that Vedavyasa dictated the text to Ganesha, who wrote it down. But Ganesha had a condition before accepting. Vedavyasa would have to dictate continuously, without stopping. Vedavyasa threw in a counter-condition. Ganesha would have to

understand each couplet before he wrote it down. To flummox Ganesha and give himself time to think, Vedavyasa threw in some cryptic verses. This attractive anecdote has been excised from the critical edition's text. Barring material that is completely religious (specific hymns or the Bhagavad Gita), the Sanskrit text is reasonably easy to understand. Oddly, I have had the most difficulty with things that Vidura has sometimes said. Arya has today come to connote ethnicity. Originally, it meant language. That is, those who spoke Sanskrit were Aryas. Those who did not speak Sanskrit were mlecchas. Vidura is supposed to have been skilled in the mlechha language. Is that the reason why some of Vidura's statements seem obscure? In similar vein, in popular renderings, when Droupadi is being disrobed, she prays to Krishna. Krishna provides the never-ending stream of garments that stump Duhshasana. The critical edition has excised the prayer to Krishna. The never-ending stream of garments is given as an extraordinary event. However, there is no intervention from Krishna.

How is the Mahabharata classified? The core component is the couplet or shloka. Several such shlokas form a chapter or *adhyaya*. Several adhyayas form a parva. Most people probably think that the Mahabharata has eighteen parvas. This is true, but there is another 100-parva classification that is indicated in the text itself. That is, the adhyayas can be classified either according to eighteen parvas or according to 100 parvas. The table (given on pp. xxiii–xxvi), based on the critical edition, should make this clear. As the table shows, the present critical edition only has ninety-eight parvas of the 100-parva classification, though the 100 parvas are named in the text.

Eighteen-parva classification	*100-parva classification*	*Number of adhyayas*	*Number of shlokas*
(1) Adi	1) Anukramanika[8]	1	210
	2) Parvasamgraha	1	243
	3) Poushya	1	195
	4) Pouloma	9	153
	5) Astika	41	1025
	6) Adi-vamshavatarana	5	257
	7) Sambhava	65	2394
	8) Jatugriha-daha	15	373
	9) Hidimba-vadha	6	169
	10) Baka-vadha	8	206
	11) Chaitraratha	21	557
	12) Droupadi-svayamvara	12	263
	13) Vaivahika	6	155
	14) Viduragamana	7	174

[8] Anukramanika is sometimes called Anukramani.

Eighteen-parva classification	*100-parva classification*	*Number of adhyayas*	*Number of shlokas*
	15) Rajya-labha	1	50
	16) Arjuna-vanavasa	11	298
	17) Subhadra-harana	2	57
	18) Harana harika	1	82
	19) Khandava-daha	12	344
		Total = 225	Total = 7205
(2) Sabha	20) Sabha	11	429
	21) Mantra	6	222
	22) Jarasandha-vadha	5	195
	23) Digvijaya	7	188
	24) Rajasuya	3	97
	25) Arghabhiharana	4	99
	26) Shishupala-vadha	6	191
	27) Dyuta	23	734
	28) Anudyuta	7	232
		Total = 72	Total = 2387
(3) Aranyaka	29) Aranyaka	11	327
	30) Kirmira-vadha	1	75
	31) Kairata	30	1158
	32) Indralokabhigamana	37	1157
	33) Tirtha-yatra	74	2422
	34) Jatasura-vadha	1	61
	35) Yaksha-yuddha	18	710
	36) Ajagara	6	201
	37) Markandeya-samasya	43	1656
	38) Droupadi-Satyabhama-sambada	3	88
	39) Ghosha-yatra	19	519
	40) Mriga-svapna-bhaya	1	16
	41) Vrihi-drounika	3	117
	42) Droupadi-harana	36	1247
	43) Kundala-harana	11	294
	44) Araneya	5	191
		Total = 299	Total = 10239
(4) Virata	45) Vairata	12	271
	46) Kichaka-vadha	11	353
	47) Go-grahana	39	933
	48) Vaivahika	5	179
		Total = 67	Total = 1736

Eighteen-parva classification	*100-parva classification*	*Number of adhyayas*	*Number of shlokas*
(5) Udyoga	49) Udyoga	21	575
	50) Sanjaya-yana	11	274
	51) Prajagara	9	541
	52) Sanatsujata	4	121
	53) Yana-sandhi	24	709
	54) Bhagavat-yana	65	2053
	55) Karna-upanivada	14	351
	56) Abhiniryana	4	169
	57) Bhishma-abhishechana	4	122
	58) Uluka-yana	4	100
	59) Ratha-atiratha-samkhya	9	231
	60) Ambopakhyana	28	755
		Total = 197	Total = 6001
(6) Bhishma	61) Jambukhanda-vinirmana	11	377
	62) Bhumi	2	87
	63) Bhagavad-gita	27	974
	64) Bhishma-vadha	77	3943
		Total = 117	Total = 5381
(7) Drona	65) Dronabhisheka	15	634
	66) Samshaptaka-vadha	16	717
	67) Abhimanyu-vadha	20	640
	68) Pratijna	9	365
	69) Jayadratha-vadha	61	2834
	70) Ghatotkacha-vadha	33	1645
	71) Drona-vadha	11	692
	72) Narayanastra-moksha	8	542
		Total = 173	Total = 8069
(8) Karna	73) Karna-vadha	69	3870
(9) Shalya	74) Shalya-vadha	16	1074
	75) Hrada-pravesha	12	664
	76) Tirtha-yatra	25	1258
	77) Gada-yuddha	11	545
		Total = 64	Total = 3541
(10) Souptika	78) Souptika	9	514
	79) Aishika	9	257
		Total = 18	Total = 771

Eighteen-parva classification	100-parva classification	Number of adhyayas	Number of shlokas
(11) Stri	80) Vishoka	8	177
	81) Stri	17	468
	82) Shraddha	1	44
	83) Jala-pradanika	1	24
		Total = 27	Total = 713
(12) Shanti	84) Raja-dharma	128	4511
	85) Apad-dharma	39	1560
	86) Moksha-dharma	186	6935
		Total = 353	Total = 13006
(13) Anushasana	87) Dana-dharma	152	6409
	88) Bhishma-svargarohana	2	84
		Total = 154	Total = 6493
(14) Ashva-medhika	89) Ashvamedha	96	2741
(15) Ashra-mavasika	90) Ashrama-vasa	35	736
	91) Putra-darshana	9	234
	92) Naradagamana	3	91
		Total = 47	Total = 1061
(16) Mousala	93) Mousala	9	273
(17) Mahapra-sthanika	94) Mahaprasthanika	3	106
(18) Svargarohana	95) Svargarohana	5	194
Hari Vamsha	96) Hari-vamsha	45	2442
	97) Vishnu	68	3426
	98) Bhavishya	5	205
		Total = 118	Total = 6073
Grand total = 19	Grand total = 98 (95 + 3)	Grand total = 2113 (1995 + 118)	Grand total = 79,860 (73787 + 6073)

Thus, interpreted in terms of BORI's critical edition, the Mahabharata no longer possesses the 100,000 shlokas it is supposed to have. The figure is a little short of 75,000 (73,787 to be precise). Should the Hari Vamsha be included in a translation of the Mahabharata? It doesn't quite belong. Yet, it is described as a *khila* or supplement to the Mahabharata and BORI includes it as part of the critical edition, though in a separate volume. Hence, I have included the Hari Vamsha in this translation as well. With the Hari Vamsha, the number of shlokas increases to a shade less than 80,000 (79,860 to be precise). However, in some of the regional versions the text of the Mahabharata proper is closer to 85,000 shlokas and with the Hari Vamsha included, one approaches 95,000, though one doesn't quite touch 100,000.

Why should there be another translation of the Mahabharata? Surely, it must have been translated innumerable times. Contrary to popular impression, unabridged translations of the Mahabharata in English are extremely rare. One should not confuse abridged translations with unabridged versions. There are only five unabridged translations—by Kisori Mohan Ganguly (1883–96), by Manmatha Nath Dutt (1895–

1905), by the University of Chicago and J.A.B. van Buitenen (1973 onwards), by P. Lal and Writers Workshop (2005 onwards) and the Clay Sanskrit Library edition (2005 onwards). Of these, P. Lal is more a poetic trans-creation than a translation. The Clay Sanskrit Library edition is not based on the critical edition, deliberately so. In the days of Ganguly and Dutt, the critical edition didn't exist. The language in these two versions is now archaic and there are some shlokas that these two translators decided not to include, believing them to be untranslatable in that day and age. Almost three decades later, the Chicago version is still not complete, and the Clay edition, not being translated in sequence, is still in progress. However, the primary reason for venturing into yet another translation is not just the vacuum that exists, but also reason for dissatisfaction with other attempts. Stated more explicitly, this translation, I believe, is better and more authentic—but I leave it to the reader to be the final judge. (While translating 80,000 shlokas is a hazardous venture, since Ganguly, Dutt and Lal are Bengalis, surely a fourth Bengali must also be preeminently qualified to embark on this venture!)

A few comments on the translation are now in order. First, there is the vexed question of diacritical marks—should they be used or not? Diacritical marks make the translation and pronunciation more accurate, but often put readers off. Sacrificing academic purity, there is thus a conscious decision to avoid diacritical marks. Second, since diacritical marks are not being used, Sanskrit words and proper names are written in what seems to be phonetically natural and the closest—such as, Droupadi rather than Draupadi. There are rare instances where avoidance of diacritical marks can cause minor confusion, for example, between Krishna (Krishnaa) as in Droupadi[9] and Krishna as in Vaasudeva. However, such instances are extremely rare and the context should make these differences, which are mostly of the gender kind, clear. Third, there are some words that simply cannot be translated. One such word is dharma. More accurately, such words are translated the first time they occur. But on subsequent occasions, they are romanized in the text. Fourth, the translation sticks to the Sanskrit text as closely as possible. If the text uses the word Kounteya, this translation will leave it as Kounteya or Kunti's son and not attempt to replace it with Arjuna. Instead, there will be a note explaining that in that specific context Kounteya refers to Arjuna or, somewhat more rarely, Yudhishthira or Bhima. This is also the case in the structure of the English sentences. To cite an instance, if a metaphor occurs towards the beginning of the Sanskrit shloka, the English sentence attempts to retain it at the beginning too. Had this not been done, the English might have read smoother. But to the extent there is a trade-off, one has stuck to what is most accurate, rather than attempting to make the English smooth and less stilted.

As the table shows, the parvas (in the eighteen-parva classification) vary widely in length. The gigantic Aranyaka or Shanti Parva can be contrasted with the slim Mousala

Parva. Breaking up the translation into separate volumes based on this eighteen-parva classification therefore doesn't work. The volumes will not be remotely similar in size. Most translators seem to keep a target of ten to twelve volumes when translating all the parvas. Assuming ten volumes, 10 per cent means roughly 200 chapters and 7000 shlokas. This works rather well for Adi Parva, but collapses thereafter. Most translators therefore have Adi Parva as the first volume and then handle the heterogeneity across the eighteen parvas in subsequent volumes. This translation approaches the break-up of volumes somewhat differently, in the sense that roughly 10 per cent of the text is covered in each volume. The complete text, as explained earlier, is roughly 200 chapters and 7,000 shlokas per volume. For example, then, this first volume has been cut off at 199 chapters and a little less than 6,500 shlokas. It includes 90 per cent of Adi Parva, but not all of it and covers the first fifteen parvas of the 100- (or 98-) parva classification.

The Mahabharata is one of the greatest stories ever told. It has plots and subplots and meanderings and digressions. It is much more than the core story of a war between the Kouravas and the Pandavas, which everyone is familiar with, the culmination of which was the battle in Kurukshetra. In the Adi Parva, there is a lot more which happens before the Kouravas and the Pandavas actually arrive on the scene. In the 100-parva classification, the Kouravas and the Pandavas don't arrive on the scene until Section 6.

From the Vedas and Vedanta literature, we know that Janamejaya and Parikshit were historical persons. From Patanjali's grammar and other contemporary texts, we know that the Mahabharata text existed by around 400 BCE. This need not of course be the final text of Mahabharata, but could have been the original text of Jaya. The Hindu eras or *yugas* are four in number—Satya (or Krita) Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga and Kali Yuga. This cycle then repeats itself, with another Satya Yuga following Kali Yuga. The events of the Ramayana occurred in Treta Yuga. The events of the Mahabharata occurred in Dvapara Yuga. This is in line with Rama being Vishnu's seventh incarnation and Krishna being the eighth. (The ninth is Buddha and the tenth is Kalki.) We are now in Kali Yuga. Kali Yuga didn't begin with the Kurukshetra war. It began with Krishna's death, an event that occurred thirty-six years after the Kurukshetra war. Astronomical data do exist in the epic. These can be used to date the Kurukshetra war, or the advent of Kali Yuga. However, if the text was composed at different points in time, with additions and interpolations, internal consistency in astronomical data is unlikely. In popular belief, following two alternative astronomers, the Kurukshetra war has been dated to 3102 BCE (following Aryabhatta) and 2449 BCE (following Varahamihira). This doesn't mesh with the timelines of Indian history. Mahapadma Nanda ascended the

throne in 382 BCE, a historical fact on which there is no dispute. The Puranas have genealogical lists. Some of these state that 1050 years elapsed between Parikshit's birth and Mahapadma Nanda's ascension. Others state that 1015 years elapsed. (When numerals are written in words, it is easy to confuse 15 with 50.) This takes Parikshit's birth and the Kurukshetra war to around 1400 BCE. This is probably the best we can do, since we also know that the Kuru kingdom flourished between 1200 BCE and 800 BCE. To keep the record straight, archaeological material has been used to bring forward the date of the Kurukshetra war to around 900 BCE, the period of the Iron Age.

As was mentioned, in popular belief, the incidents of the Ramayana took place before the incidents of the Mahabharata. The Ramayana story also figures in the Mahabharata. However, there is no reference to any significant Mahabharata detail in the Ramayana. Nevertheless, from reading the text, one gets the sense that the Mahabharata represents a more primitive society than the Ramayana. The fighting in the Ramayana is more genteel and civilized. You don't have people hurling rocks and stones at each other, or fighting with trees and bare arms. Nor do people rip apart the enemy's chest and drink blood. The geographical knowledge in the Mahabharata is also more limited than in the Ramayana, both towards the east and towards the south. In popular belief, the Kurukshetra war occurred as a result of a dispute over land and the kingdom. That is true, in so far as the present text is concerned. However, another fight over cattle took place in the Virata Parva and the Pandavas were victorious in that too. This is not the place to expand on the argument. But it is possible to construct a plausible hypothesis that this was the core dispute. Everything else was added as later embellishments. The property dispute was over cattle and not land. In human evolution, cattle represents a more primitive form of property than land. In that stage, humankind is still partly nomadic and not completely settled. If this hypothesis is true, the Mahabharata again represents an earlier period compared to the Ramayana. This leads to the following kind of proposition. In its final form, the Mahabharata was indeed composed after the Ramayana. But the earliest version of the Mahabharata was composed before the earliest version of the Ramayana. And the events of the Mahabharata occurred before the events of the Ramayana, despite popular belief. The proposition about the feud ending with Virata Parva illustrates the endless speculation that is possible with the Mahabharata material. Did Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva ever exist? Nakula and Sahadeva have limited roles to play in the story. Arjuna's induction could have been an attempt to assert Indra's supremacy. Arjuna represents such an integral strand in the story (and of the Bhagavad Gita), that such a suggestion is likely to be dismissed out of hand. But consider the following. Droupadi loved Arjuna a little bit more than the others. That's the reason she was denied admission to heaven. Throughout the text, there are innumerable instances where Droupadi faces difficulties. Does she ever summon Arjuna for help on such occasions? No, she does not. She summons Bhima. Therefore, did

Arjuna exist at all? Or were there simply two original Pandava brothers—one powerful and strong, and the other weak and useless in physical terms. Incidentally, the eighteen-parva classification is clearly something that was done much later. The 100-parva classification seems to be older.

The Mahabharata is much more real than the Ramayana. And, therefore, much more fascinating. Every conceivable human emotion figures in it, which is the reason why it is possible to identify with it even today. The text itself states that what is not found in the Mahabharata, will not be found anywhere else. Unlike the Ramayana, India is littered with real places that have identifications with the Mahabharata. (Ayodhya or Lanka or Chitrakuta are identifications that are less certain.) Kurukshetra, Hastinapura, Indraprastha, Karnal, Mathura, Dvaraka, Gurgaon, Girivraja are real places: the list is endless. In all kinds of unlikely places, one comes across temples erected by the Pandavas when they were exiled to the forest. In some of these places, archaeological excavations have substantiated the stories. The war for regional supremacy in the Ganga–Yamuna belt is also a plausible one. The Vrishnis and the Shurasenas (the Yadavas) are isolated, they have no clear alliance (before the Pandavas) with the powerful Kurus. There is the powerful Magadha kingdom under Jarasandha and Jarasandha had made life difficult for the Yadavas. He chased them away from Mathura to Dvaraka. Shishupala of the Chedi kingdom doesn't like Krishna and the Yadavas either. Through Kunti, Krishna has a matrimonial alliance with the Pandavas. Through Subhadra, the Yadavas have another matrimonial alliance with the Pandavas. Through another matrimonial alliance, the Pandavas obtain Drupada of Panchala as an ally. In the course of the royal sacrifice, Shishupala and Jarasandha are eliminated. Finally, there is yet another matrimonial alliance with Virata of the Matsya kingdom, through Abhimanyu. When the two sides face each other on the field of battle, they are more than evenly matched. Other than the Yadavas, the Pandavas have Panchala, Kashi, Magadha, Matsya and Chedi on their side. The Kouravas have Pragjyotisha, Anga, Kekaya, Sindhu, Avanti, Gandhara, Shalva, Bahlika and Kamboja as allies. At the end of the war, all these kings are slain and the entire geographical expanse comes under the control of the Pandavas and the Yadavas. Only Kripacharya, Ashvatthama and Kritavarma survive on the Kourava side.

Reading the Mahabharata, one forms the impression that it is based on some real incidents. That does not mean that a war on the scale that is described took place. Or that miraculous weapons and chariots were the norm. But there is such a lot of trivia, unconnected with the main story, that their inclusion seems to serve no purpose unless they were true depictions. For instance, what does the physical description of Kripa's sister and Drona's wife, Kripi, have to do with the main story? It is also more real than the Ramayana because nothing, especially the treatment of human emotions and behaviour, exists in black and white. Everything is in shades of grey. The Uttara Kanda

of the Ramayana is believed to have been a later interpolation. If one excludes the Uttara Kanda, we generally know what is good. We know who is good. We know what is bad. We know who is bad. The Ramayana is like a clichéd Bollywood film. This is never the case with the Mahabharata. However, a qualification is necessary. Most of us are aware of the Mahabharata story because we have read some version or the other, typically an abridged one. Every abridged version simplifies and condenses, distills out the core story. And in doing that, it tends to paint things in black and white, fitting everything into the mould of good and bad. The Kouravas are bad. The Pandavas are good. And good eventually triumphs. The unabridged Mahabharata is anything but that. It is much more nuanced. Duryodhana isn't invariably bad. He is referred to as Suyodhana as well, and not just by his father. History is always written from the point of view of the victors. While the Mahabharata is generally laudatory towards the Pandavas, there are several places where the text has a pro-Kourava stance. There are several places where the text has an anti-Krishna stance. That's yet another reason why one should read an unabridged version, so as not to miss out on these nuances. Take the simple point about inheritance of the kingdom. Dhritarashtra was blind. Consequently, the king was Pandu. On Pandu's death, who should inherit the kingdom? Yudhishthira was the eldest among the brothers. (Actually, Karna was, though it didn't become known until later.) We thus tend to assume that the kingdom was Yudhishthira's by right, because he was the eldest. (The division of the kingdom into two, Hastinapura and Indraprastha, is a separate matter.) But such primogeniture was not universally clear. A case can also be established for Duryodhana, because he was Dhritarashtra's son. If primogeniture was the rule, the eldest son of the Pandavas was Ghatotkacha, not Abhimanyu. Before both were killed, Ghatotkacha should have had a claim to the throne. However, there is no such suggestion anywhere. The argument that Ghatotkacha was the son of a rakshasa or demon will not wash. He never exhibited any demonic qualities and was a dutiful and loving son. Karna saved up a weapon for Arjuna and this was eventually used to kill Ghatotkacha. At that time, we have the unseemly sight of Krishna dancing around in glee at Ghatotkacha being killed.

In the Mahabharata, because it is nuanced, we never quite know what is good and what is bad, who is good and who is bad. Yes, there are degrees along a continuum. But there are no watertight and neat compartments. The four objectives of human existence are dharma, artha, kama and moksha. Etymologically, dharma is that which upholds. If one goes by the Bhagavad Gita, pursuit of these four are also transient diversions. Because the fundamental objective is to transcend these four, even moksha. Within these four, the Mahabharata is about a conflict of dharma. Dharma has been reduced to *varnashrama* dharma, according to the four classes (*varnas*) and four stages of life (*ashramas*). However, these are collective interpretations of dharma, in the sense that a Kshatriya in the *garhasthya* (householder) stage has certain duties. Dharma in the

Mahabharata is individual too. Given an identical situation, a Kshatriya in the garhasthya stage might adopt a course of action that is different from that adopted by another Kshatriya in the garhasthya stage, and who is to judge what is wrong and what is right? Bhishma adopted a life of celibacy. So did Arjuna, for a limited period. In that stage of celibacy, both were approached by women who had fallen in love with them. And if those desires were not satisfied, the respective women would face difficulties, even death. Bhishma spurned the advance, but Arjuna accepted it. The conflict over dharma is not only the law versus morality conflict made famous by Krishna and Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita. It pervades the Mahabharata, in terms of a conflict over two different notions of dharma. Having collectively married Droupadi, the Pandavas have agreed that when one of them is closeted with Droupadi, the other four will not intrude. And if there is such an instance of intrusion, they will go into self-exile. Along comes a Brahmana whose cattle have been stolen by thieves. Arjuna's weapons are in the room where Droupadi and Yudhishthira are. Which is the higher dharma? Providing succour to the Brahmana or adhering to the oath? Throughout the Mahabharata, we have such conflicts, with no clear normative indications of what is wrong and what is right, because there are indeed no absolute answers. Depending on one's decisions, one faces the consequences and this brings in the unsolvable riddle of the tension between free will and determinism, the so-called karma concept. The boundaries of philosophy and religion blur.

These conflicts over dharma are easy to identify with. It is easy to empathize with the protagonists, because we face such conflicts every day. That is precisely the reason why the Mahabharata is read even today. And the reason one says every conceivable human emotion figures in the story. Everyone familiar with the Mahabharata has thought about the decisions taken and about the characters. Why was life so unfair to Karna? Why was Krishna partial to the Pandavas? Why didn't he prevent the war? Why was Abhimanyu killed so unfairly? Why did the spirited and dark Droupadi, so unlike the Sita of the Ramayana, have to be humiliated publicly?

It is impossible to pinpoint when and how my interest in the Mahabharata started. As a mere toddler, my maternal grandmother used to tell me stories from *Chandi*, part of the Markandeya Purana. I still vividly recollect pictures from her copy of *Chandi*: Kali licking the demon Raktavija's blood. Much later, in my early teens, at school in Ramakrishna Mission, Narendrapur, I first read the Bhagavad Gita, without understanding much of what I read. The alliteration and poetry in the first chapter was attractive enough for me to learn it by heart. Perhaps the seeds were sown there. In my late teens, I stumbled upon Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay's *Krishna Charitra*, written in

1886. Bankimchandra was not only a famous novelist, he was a brilliant essayist. For a long time, *Krishna Charitra* was not available other than in Bengali. It has now been translated into English, but deserves better dissemination. A little later, when in college, I encountered Buddhadeb Bose's *Mahabharater Katha*. That was another brilliant collection of essays, first serialized in a magazine and then published as a book in 1974. This too was originally in Bengali, but is now available in English. Unlike my sons, my first exposure to the Mahabharata story came not through television serials but comic books. Upendrakishore Raychowdhury's Mahabharata (and Ramayana) for children was staple diet, later supplanted by Rajshekhar Basu's abridged versions of both epics, written for adults. Both were in Bengali. In English, there was Chakravarti Rajagopalachari's abridged translation, still a perennial favourite. Later, Chakravarthi Narasimhan's selective unabridged translation gave a flavour of what the Mahabharata actually contained. In Bengal, the Kashiram Das version of the Mahabharata, written in the seventeenth century, was quite popular. I never found this appealing. But in the late 1970s, I stumbled upon a treasure. Kolkata's famous College Street was a storehouse of old and second-hand books in those days. You never knew what you would discover when browsing. In the nineteenth century, an unabridged translation of the Mahabharata had been done in Bengali under the editorship of Kaliprasanna Singha (1840–70). I picked this up for the princely sum of Rs 5. The year may have been 1979, but Rs 5 was still amazing. This was my first complete reading of the unabridged version of the Mahabharata. This particular copy probably had antiquarian value. The pages would crumble in my hands and I soon replaced my treasured possession with a republished reprint. Not longer after, I acquired the Aryashastra version of the Mahabharata, with both the Sanskrit and the Bengali together. In the early 1980s, I was also exposed to three Marathi writers writing on the Mahabharata. There was Iravati Karve's *Yuganta*. This was available in both English and in Marathi. I read the English one first, followed by the Marathi. The English version isn't an exact translation of the Marathi and the Marathi version is far superior. Then there was Durga Bhagwat's *Vyas Parva*. This was in Marathi and I am not aware of an English translation. Finally, there was Shivaji Sawant's *Mritunjaya*, a kind of autobiography for Karna. This was available both in English and in Marathi.

In the early 1980s, quite by chance, I encountered two shlokas, one from Valmiki's Ramayana, the other from Kalidasa's *Meghadutam*. These were two poets separated by anything between 500 to 1,000 years, the exact period being an uncertain one. The shloka in *Meghadutam* is right towards the beginning, the second shloka to be precise. It is the first day in the month of Ashada. The yaksha has been cursed and has been separated from his beloved. The mountains are covered with clouds. These clouds are like elephants, bent down as if in play. The shloka in the Valmiki Ramayana occurs in Sundara Kanda. Rama now knows that Sita is in Lanka. But the monsoon stands in the

way of the invasion. The clouds are streaked with flags of lightning and garlanded with geese. They are like mountain peaks and are thundering, like elephants fighting. At that time, I did not know that elephants were a standard metaphor for clouds in Sanskrit literature. I found it amazing that two different poets separated by time had thought of elephants. And because the yaksha was pining for his beloved, the elephants were playing. But because Rama was impatient to fight, the elephants were fighting. I resolved that I must read all this in the original. It was a resolution I have never regretted. I think that anyone who has not read *Meghadutam* in Sanskrit has missed out on a thing of beauty that will continue to be a joy for generations to come.

In the early 1980s, Professor Ashok Rudra was a professor of economics in Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. I used to teach in Presidency College, Kolkata, and we sometimes met. Professor Rudra was a left-wing economist and didn't think much of my economics. I dare say the feeling was reciprocated. By tacit agreement, we never discussed economics. Instead, we discussed Indological subjects. At that point, Professor Rudra used to write essays on such subjects in Bengali. I casually remarked, 'I want to do a statistical test on the frequency with which the five Pandavas used various weapons in the Kurukshetra war.' Most sensible men would have dismissed the thought as crazy. But Professor Rudra wasn't sensible by usual norms of behaviour and he was also a trained statistician. He encouraged me to do the paper, written and published in Bengali, using the Aryashastra edition. Several similar papers followed, written in Bengali. In 1983, I moved to Pune, to the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, a stone's throw away from BORI. *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* (*ABORI*) is one of the most respected journals in Indology. Professor G.B. Palsule was then the editor of *ABORI* and later went on to become Director of BORI. I translated one of the Bengali essays into English and went and met Professor Palsule, hoping to get it published in *ABORI*. To Professor Palsule's eternal credit, he didn't throw the dilettante out. Instead, he said he would get the paper refereed. The referee's substantive criticism was that the paper should have been based on the critical edition, which is how I came to know about it. Eventually, this paper (and a few more) were published in *ABORI*. In 1989, these became a book titled *Essays on the Ramayana and the Mahabharata*, published when the Mahabharata frenzy had reached a peak on television. The book got excellent reviews, but hardly sold. It is now out of print. As an aside, the book was jointly dedicated to Professor Rudra and Professor Palsule, a famous economist and a famous Indologist respectively. Both were flattered. However, when I gave him a copy, Professor Rudra said, 'Thank you very much. But who is Professor Palsule?' And Professor Palsule remarked, 'Thank you very much. But who is Professor Rudra?'

While the research interest in the Mahabharata remained, I got sidetracked into translating. Through the 1990s, there were abridged translations of the Maha Puranas, the Vedas and the eleven major Upanishads. I found that I enjoyed translating from the

Sanskrit to English and since these volumes were well received, perhaps I did do a good job. With Penguin as publisher, I did a translation of the Bhagavad Gita, something I had always wanted to do. *Sarama and Her Children*, a book on attitudes towards dogs in India, also with Penguin, followed. I kept thinking about doing an unabridged translation of the Mahabharata and waited to muster up the courage. That courage now exists, though the task is daunting. With something like two million words and ten volumes expected, the exercise seems open-ended. But why translate the Mahabharata? In 1924, George Mallory, with his fellow climber Andrew Irvine, may or may not have climbed Mount Everest. They were last seen a few hundred metres from the summit, before they died. Mallory was once asked why he wanted to climb Everest and he answered, 'Because it's there.' Taken out of context, there is no better reason for wanting to translate the Mahabharata. There is a steep mountain to climb. And I would not have dared had I not been able to stand on the shoulders of the three intellectual giants who have preceded me—Kisori Mohan Ganguli, Manmatha Nath Dutt and J.A.B. van Buitenen.

Bibek Debroy

Virata Parva

The Pandavas have to spend the thirteenth year in disguise and in hiding. They decide to do this in the kingdom of Virata and this parva is named after that. In the 18-parva classification of the Mahabharata, Virata Parva is fourth. This parva has sixty-seven chapters. In the 100-parva classification of the Mahabharata, Sections 45 through 48 constitute Virata Parva. In the numbering of the chapters in this parva, the first number is a consecutive one, starting with the beginning of the Mahabharata. And the second number, within brackets, is the numbering of the chapter within Virata Parva.

Section Forty-Five

Vairata Parva

This section has 282 shlokas and twelve chapters.

Chapter 597(1): 23 shlokas
Chapter 598(2): 27 shlokas
Chapter 599(3): 19 shlokas
Chapter 600(4): 49 shlokas
Chapter 601(5): 31 shlokas
Chapter 602(6): 16 shlokas
Chapter 603(7): 11 shlokas
Chapter 604(8): 33 shlokas
Chapter 605(9): 15 shlokas
Chapter 606(10): 13 shlokas
Chapter 607(11): 13 shlokas
Chapter 608(12): 32 shlokas

This section is named after Virata. Virata is the proper name, whereas Vairata is the adjective. In Section 44 (Volume 3), at the end of Aranyaka (Vana) Parva, a brahmana's kindling was robbed by a deer and the Pandavas pursued the deer. This section takes off from there. The Pandavas decide to spend the thirteenth year in disguise in King Virata's kingdom. In individual disguises, the Pandavas and Droupadi arrive in King Virata's court and are accepted by him. Yudhishthira becomes Kanka, Bhima becomes Ballava, Arjuna becomes Brihannada, Nakula becomes Granthika, Sahadeva becomes Tantipala and Droupadi becomes Sairandhri.

597(1)

Janamejaya asked, 'Oppressed by fear of Duryodhana, how did my great grandfathers live in disguise in the city of Virata?'[1]

Vaishampayana said, 'Having obtained boons from Dharma in that fashion,[2] the one who was foremost among upholders of dharma[3] returned to the hermitage and told the brahmanas everything that had happened. Having recounted everything to the brahmanas, Yudhishthira returned the kindling to the brahmana.[4] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Then Dharma's son, the great-minded King Yudhishthira, called all his younger brothers and spoke to them in this way. "Dislodged from our kingdom, we have lived for twelve years and the thirteenth has arrived now. We will have to live through a difficult period. O Kounteya Arjuna! Therefore, think of a desirable place where all of us may dwell, without being detected by our enemies." Arjuna replied, "O lord of men! O bull among the Bharata lineage! Because of the boon that has been given to us by Dharma, we can roam undetected by men. I will recount the kingdoms where we may dwell. Some of them are beautiful and secluded. Which of these seems attractive to you? Around the kingdom of the Kurus, there are many beautiful countries with an abundance

of food—Panchala, Chedi, Matsya, Shurasena, Patachchara, Dasharna, Navarashtra, Malla, Shalva and Yugandhara. O king! Which among these seems to you to be an attractive place to live in? O Indra among kings! Where will we dwell for a year?" Yudhishthira said, "O mighty-armed one! It will indeed be as the illustrious lord of all beings[5] has said. It cannot be otherwise. We must certainly dwell in a place that is beautiful, auspicious and pleasant, where all of us can live without any fear. Let us consult among ourselves. The powerful Matsya Virata will protect the Pandavas. He is aged, generous, with a great deal of riches and conducts himself in accordance with dharma. O son![6] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Let us happily spend a year in the city of Virata.[7] We will perform tasks for him there.[8] O descendants of the Kuru lineage! Let each one of us describe the tasks that he will perform, the kind of duties that we will undertake for him." Arjuna replied, "O god among men! O virtuous one! What duty will you undertake in the kingdom of King Virata? What appeals to you? You are gentle, generous, modest and devoted to dharma. Truth is your valour. O king! O Pandava! Confronted by this calamity, what will you do? O king! You are not familiar with the hardships faced by ordinary people. How will you pass through this calamity that has come over you?" Yudhishthira said, "O descendants of the Kuru lineage! Listen to the duties that I will undertake. When I arrive before King Virata, bull among men, I will become a member of that great-souled king's assembly. I will pose as a brahmana named Kanka, skilled in dice and fond of gambling.[9] I will use beautiful dice made out of lapis lazuli, gold, ivory and lustrous fruit,[10] with black and red dots. If asked, I will tell the king that in earlier times I used to be Yudhishthira's friend, as dear to him as life itself. I have now told you how I wish to spend my time. O Vrikodara![11] What task will you perform in Virata?"'

598(2)

'Bhima said, "I think I will present myself before King Virata as a superintendent of the kitchen and give my name as Ballava. Since I possess culinary skills, I will cook him dishes. I will surpass all the skilled chefs who have cooked dishes for him earlier and thus generate affection in his mind. I will fetch large loads of wood for him. The king will be pleased on witnessing my great deeds. O king! If there are powerful elephants, or immensely strong bulls, that need to be overpowered by me, I will pacify them too. If there are warriors who need to be fought in the assembly, I will vanquish them also and increase his affection towards me. But I will never slay any of those fighters. I will bring them down so that they do not perish. If asked, I will say that I was cook, cattle-tender, chef and wrestler to Yudhishthira. O lord of the earth! I will act so as to protect myself on my own. I promise that I will carry myself in this way."

'Yudhishthira said, "He is foremost among men. In a desire to burn down Khandava, he was the one before whom Agni appeared in the disguise of a brahmana in earlier

times. He was accompanied by Dasharha then.[12] He is immensely strong and mighty-armed. He is the invincible descendant of the Kuru lineage. What duty will Kounteya Dhananjaya undertake? He confronted the conflagration and satisfied the fire. Ascended on a single chariot, he vanquished Indra and killed the serpents and the *rakshasas*. He is supreme among warriors. What will Arjuna do? The sun is foremost among those that heat. The brahmana is supreme among bipeds, a poisonous one among snakes. Agni is supreme among those with energy. The *vajra* is supreme among weapons. A bull with a hump is supreme among cattle. The ocean is foremost among stores of water. Parjanya[13] is supreme among those who shower down. Dhritarashtra is supreme among *nagas* and Airavata[14] among elephants. The son is supreme among those who are loved and the wife among well-wishers. O Vrikodara! Just as there is a foremost among each specific category, this young Gudakesha[15] is foremost among all archers. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He is not inferior to Indra or Vasudeva. He is the wielder of the bow Gandiva and has white horses. What will Bibhatsu do?[16] He lived for five years in the abode of the one with a thousand eyes.[17] In a form that was as radiant as that of the gods, he obtained divine weapons. I think that he is the twelfth Rudra and the thirteenth Aditya.[18] His arms are smooth and long. His skin is tough, both on the right and the left,[19] from drawing the string of the bow and marked like bulls that bear loads. The armed Arjuna is supreme, like Himalaya among the mountains, the ocean among stores of water, Shakra[20] among the thirty gods, Agni among the Vasus, the tiger among animals and Garuda among winged ones. What will he do?"

'Arjuna replied, "O lord of the earth! I promise that I will undertake the duties of a eunuch. O king! It is difficult to conceal these great marks that the string of the bow has left. I will wear earrings as radiant as the fire on my ears. O king! I will wear a braid on my head and name myself Brihannada.[21] I will repeatedly recount stories and observe the characteristics of a woman. I will please the king and the others who live in the inner quarters through different forms of singing and dancing and the playing of varied kinds of music.[22] O king! I will teach the women in Virata's abode these arts. I will recount the many deeds, fruits and conducts of people. O Kounteya! I will disguise myself in this way. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If I am asked by the king, I will say that I was Droupadi's attendant in Yudhishthira's house. O Indra among kings! In this way, I will pleasantly spend my time in Virata's abode, disguising myself through deceit, just as Nala had done."'[23]

599(3)

'Yudhishthira asked, "O Nakula! O son![24] You are delicate, brave, handsome and used to pleasure. What will you do and how will you act?"

'Nakula replied, "I will become a keeper of horses for King Virata. I find pleasure in that kind of work and will give myself the name of Granthika. I am skilled in training

horses and also in treating horses. O king of the Kuru lineage! I have always loved horses, just as much as you have. If people in the city of Virata question me, I will tell them that this is how I find pleasure."

'Yudhishthira asked, "O Sahadeva! How will you find pleasure before him?[25] O son![26] What task will you undertake? How will you disguise yourself while roaming there?"

'Sahadeva replied, "I will tend to the cows of King Virata. I am skilled in tending to cattle, milking them and counting them. Know that I will be called by the name of Tantipala. I will conduct myself skilfully and do not be anxious on my account. In earlier times, you have naturally used me for tending to cattle. O lord of the earth! I am acquainted with all the skills connected with that task, the traits and conduct of cattle and the auspicious marks. O lord of the earth! I know all this and other things extremely well. O king! I know which bulls possess marks that deserve worship, and the smell of whose urine makes barren cows give birth. I will conduct myself in this way, for this always brings pleasure to me. O king! No one will be able to recognize me and you will be happy."

'Yudhishthira said, "This is our beloved wife, dearer to us than our lives. She should be protected like a mother and worshipped like an elder sister. What duty will Krishna Droupadi perform and how will she conduct herself? She is not familiar with any of the duties and tasks that women perform. She is delicate and young and is a famous princess. She is immensely fortunate and devoted to her husbands. How will she conduct herself? Ever since birth, this beautiful one has known garlands, fragrances, ornaments and varied garments."

'Droupadi replied, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In this world, there are unprotected maidservants known as *sairandhri*.[27] It is known to people that no other women conduct themselves in this fashion. If asked, I will call myself Sairandhri, adept at dressing the hair. Concealing myself in this way, I will enter the service of Sudeshna, the king's famous wife. On obtaining me, she will protect me. Do not be unhappy in this way."

'Yudhishthira said, "O Krishna! You speak well, deserving of one who has been born in a noble lineage. You do not know any sin. You are virtuous and always base yourself on righteous vows."'

600(4)

'Yudhishthira said, "You have stated the tasks and the duties that you will perform. To the best of my intelligence, I have decided that I approve of this. Let our priest leave, together with the superintendents of the kitchen and the cooks, and preserve the *agnihotra*[28] in Drupada's abode. It is my view that Indrasena[29] and the other charioteers should take the empty chariots and swiftly proceed to Dvaravati. Let all the women who tend to Droupadi go to Panchala[30] with the superintendents of the kitchen and the

cooks. All of them must say, 'We do not know where the Pandavas are. All of them have deserted us and have left Dvaitavana.'"

'Dhoumya[31] said, "Devoted well-wishers can speak about things that are known. Therefore, I will speak and listen to my reasons. O princes! I will tell you about life in a king's abode and about how, having reached the king's household, you can free yourselves from harm. O Kouravyas! Life in a king's abode is difficult, even for those who are acquainted with it. For an entire year you will be unknown and will not be shown any honour, even though you deserve honour. When you are shown the door, take to the door. Do not repose any trust in kings. Seek out seats that no one else desires. Live in the king's abode without assuming that, as a favourite, one can ascend his vehicle, palanquin, seat, elephant or chariot. If evil-minded ones are suspicious of the seat that you occupy, do not ascend there again. That is the way one can live in a king's residence. One should never offer advice to the king, unless he has asked for it. Be seated in silence and honour him at the right time. Kings dislike those who disagree and people who speak lies. Wise ones never become friendly with the wives,[32] or with those who live in the inner quarters, or ill-wishers whom the king despises. With the king's knowledge, one should perform the most insignificant of tasks. If one conducts oneself in this fashion, one will be protected from any harm from the king. One should serve with the care one exhibits towards Agni or the other gods. There is no doubt that if one resorts to falsehood, one will confront violence. One should follow the instructions of the lord and avoid negligence, pride and anger. One should always offer advice that is good and pleasant, but one should attend more to the good than the pleasant. In every kind of conversation, one should be kindly disposed.[33] One should never say that which is unpleasant and brings no gain. A learned one serves, not thinking that he is favoured. Without any confusion, do that which is good and pleasant. One can live in the king's abode as long as one does not serve those who wish him ill, as long as one does not consort with those who seek to harm him and as long as one does not stray from one's station. The learned seat themselves to the right side or the left. It has been decreed that the place behind him is for armed guards. The grand seat in front of him has always been forbidden. One should not talk about prosperity in his presence.[34] This is regarded as extreme impertinence, even among the poor. Do not reveal to men the lies the king utters. Do not converse with men the king does not like. Do not be proud because of your bravery, or vain because of your intelligence. One becomes dear and comfortable by doing that which brings pleasure to the king. Having obtained rare riches and affection from a king, without any confusion, one must engage in that which is good and pleasant for the king. His anger can be a great obstacle. His favours can bring great fruits. Can anyone, who is honoured by the wise, think of causing harm to such a person? One should not forcefully move one's lips or thighs, or utter words with great force. Sneezing, breaking wind and clearing the throat should always be done gently.

When there is an occasion for laughter, one should laugh gently, and not like one who is mad. But one should not be too solemn. Otherwise, one will be taken to be too severe. Instead, one should smile gently, showing oneself to be benevolent. One can always live in a king's abode if one does not show delight at a gain or sorrow at a dishonour, and is always attentive. If one is a learned counsellor who always pleases the king and the prince, one can always live there in prosperity. If a beloved adviser has fallen out of favour for some reason and does not blame the king, he will regain the favours once more. One who earns his livelihood from the king, or dwells in his kingdom, must be sagacious enough to recount his good qualities, both in his presence and in his absence. An adviser who strongly desires to obtain some objective from the king, will not remain in that position for long and faces a danger to his life. For the sake of what is seen to be one's one gains, one should not say anything that goes against the king. In particular, one should always advice the king at the right place. One who is always cheerful, strong, brave, faithful like a shadow, truthful, gentle and self-controlled, is capable of dwelling in a king's abode. If another one is instructed with a task, a person who jumps forward and asks what he should do is capable of dwelling in a king's abode. If one does not waver when given instructions, whether it is hot or cold, or night or day, one is capable of dwelling in a king's abode. One who lives away from home and does not remember one's loved ones and one who finds happiness in unhappiness is capable of dwelling in a king's abode. One should not dress like him.[35] One should not laugh loudly in his presence. One should not offer a great deal of advice. In this way, one will become dear to the king. Appointed to a task, one should not touch riches.[36] Having obtained unearned riches, one faces imprisonment or death. One should use vehicles, garments, ornaments and other objects that have been given, and thus become a greater favourite. O sons![37] Spend a year in this way, adorning yourselves with good conduct. You will then regain your possessions and act according to your pleasures."

'Yudhishthira replied, "O fortunate one! We have been instructed by you. No one but you can speak in this fashion, but for our mother Kunti and the immensely intelligent Vidura. It is now necessary to do what must be done, so that we can overcome our suffering and depart so as to achieve victory."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having been thus addressed by the king, Dhoumya, supreme among brahmanas, performed all the decreed rites that were necessary for their departure. He offered kindling to the fire and rendered oblations to the utterance of mantras, so that their prosperity might increase and they might conquer the earth. The six of them, with Yajnaseni[38] at the forefront, circumambulated the fire and the brahmanas, rich in austerities. Then they departed.'

601(5)

Vaishampayana said, 'Those brave ones girded their swords and were armed with other

weapons. Their quivers were tied. They had guards on their fingers and wrists. They proceeded towards the river Kalindi.[39] On foot, they arrived at its southern bank. The archers lived there, finding fortifications in the mountains and the forests. The immensely strong great archers shot many different kinds of deer. To the north of Dasharna and the south of Panchala, the Pandavas passed through Yakrilloma and Shurasena. Attired as hunters, they entered Matsya from the direction of the forest. Having reached that country, Krishna told the king, “Behold. Many footpaths and different kinds of fields can be seen here. It is clear that Virata’s capital is still far away. My fatigue is extremely great. Let us spend the night here.” Yudhishthira replied, “O Dhananjaya! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Lift Panchali and carry her. Once we free ourselves from this forest, we will settle down in the capital.” Like a king of elephants, Arjuna swiftly raised Droupadi up. Arjuna put her down when they reached the outskirts of the capital. On arriving at the capital, Kounteya[40] asked Arjuna, “Before entering the city, where will we keep our weapons? O son![41] If we enter the city with our weapons, there is no doubt that we will create anxiety among the people. We have made a promise that even if one of us happens to be discovered, we will have to return to the forest again for twelve years.” Arjuna said, “O Indra among men! On this peak and close to the cremation ground, there is a gigantic *shami* tree.[42] It is impenetrable because of its fearsome branches and is difficult to climb. O king! Not a single man can be seen here. It is far away from the road and has grown in a forest frequented by animals and predators. Let us hang up our weapons there and then proceed towards the city. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! We will then be able to enjoy ourselves as we please.” O bull among the Bharata lineage! Having thus addressed King Dharmaraja Yudhishthira, he took off his weapons there.

‘Partha, descendant of the Kuru lineage, loosened the string of the terrible Gandiva, which made a great roar and slaughtered masses of enemies. With it, alone on a chariot, he had vanquished gods, men and snakes and conquered many opulent countries. Yudhishthira, the brave scorcher of enemies, loosened the bow’s undecaying string, one with which he had protected Kurukshetra.[43] Lord Bhimasena loosened the string of the bow with which he had defeated the Panchalas in battle and with which, he alone, had conquered many enemies in the course of his conquest. Enemies were pacified in battle because of the twang of that bow. Mountains were rent asunder with the twang of Bhimasena’s bow, which was like that of thunder. O unblemished one! He had used it to oppress the king of Saindhava.[44] The brave Pandava who had roared in battle, loosened the string of the bow with which he had conquered the west.[45] The brave lord Sahadeva, whose conduct was honest,[46] loosened the string of the weapon with which he had conquered the southern direction. With the bows, they laid down their long and yellow swords, their extremely expensive quivers and arrows that were as sharp as razors. Having himself climbed the tree, Nakula deposited these bows. He tied them firmly with

strong nooses to those branches that were extremely strong and wide and where he saw that showers of rain would not enter. The Pandavas also tied a dead body there, so that people would smell the stench of a corpse and avoid the shami tree from a distance. While they were tying the corpse to the tree, the scorchers of enemies were questioned by cowherds and herdsmen. They said, "This is our mother, who is one hundred and eighty years old. This is the dharma of our lineage, one that has been followed by our ancestors." Then the Parthas, the destroyers of enemies, approached the city.

'Yudhishthira gave them the names they would secretly address each other by—Jaya, Jayanta, Vijaya, Jayatsena and Jayadbala. In accordance with the promise that they had made, they entered the great city, to live in disguise in that kingdom for the thirteenth year.'

602(6)

Vaishampayana said, 'On his way to King Virata, who was seated in his assembly hall, Yudhishthira first fastened the dice, made of lapis lazuli and gold, to his side and gathered his garments around him. The immensely famous lord of men, extender of the Kourava lineage, went to the extremely generous lord of the kingdom.[47] He was worshipped by kings among men and was as difficult to approach as a venomous serpent.[48] He was a bull among men in his strength and beauty. He was grand and radiant, like an immortal. He was like the sun, enveloped in a great mass of clouds. The brave one was like the fire, covered in ashes. The Pandava approached, like the moon shrouded in clouds. On seeing this, King Virata questioned the advisers, brahmanas and vaishyas who were seated there. "Who is the one who has approached me, setting his eyes on my assembly hall for the first time? This supreme among men cannot be a brahmana. It seems to me that he must be a lord of the earth, though he doesn't possess a servant, a chariot or an earring. When he nears, he is as resplendent as Indra. It is my view that the marks on his body indicate that he is one whose head has been anointed.[49] He approaches me without any hesitation, the way a rutting elephant nears a pond full of lotuses." While he was thus reflecting, Yudhishthira, bull among men, approached Virata and spoke to him. "O emperor! Know that I am a brahmana who has lost everything and has come here in search of a livelihood. O unblemished one! O lord! I wish to live here with you, following your instructions." On hearing this, the king happily welcomed him.

'Thereafter, he spoke to him.[50] "Please accept our homage. O son![51] I am welcoming you with delight. Now tell me. From which king's dominion have you arrived here? Tell me truthfully, your name and your lineage. Which is the art that you wish to pursue here?" Yudhishthira replied, "In earlier times, I used to be Yudhishthira's friend. I am a brahmana from Vyaghrapada's lineage. I am skilled at throwing the dice and gambling. O Virata! I am known by the name of Kanka." Virata said, "I grant you the boon that

you desire. Rule over Matsya and I will serve you. I have always loved skilled and shrewd gamblers. You are like a god and deserve a kingdom." Yudhishthira replied, "O lord of the earth! O Matsya! If there is ever a great dispute, I will never accept the views of anyone who is inferior. But no one whom I defeat will retain his riches. Through your favours, please grant me this boon." Virata said, "If anything unpleasant is done towards you, I will kill even those who should not be killed. If it is a brahmana, I will exile him from my kingdom.[52] Let all the assembled citizens hear that Kanka is as much a lord of the kingdom as I am. You will be my friend and ride on the same vehicle. You will have many garments and a lot of food and drink. You will always look towards my inner and outer affairs. My door will always be open for you. When oppressed people approach you in search of work, you can always give them word on my behalf. There is no doubt that I will give them everything that has been promised. In my presence, you will not find anything to be scared of." Having thus met King Virata and obtained the boon from him, the brave bull among men began to dwell there happily. He was shown the ultimate honours. No one there got to know about his true intentions.'

603(7)

Vaishampayana said, 'After that, another one arrived. He was terrible in strength and his beauty was resplendent. His gait was as easy as that of a valorous lion. He held a spoon and a ladle in his hands. He also had an unsheathed black and iron sword that was devoid of any blemishes. He was in the form of a cook, but his radiance was supreme. He was like the sun illuminating the world. He was attired in extremely dark garments and was like the king of the mountains.[53] He approached the king of Matsya and stood there. On seeing the supreme one arrive, the king spoke to the assembled citizens. "Who is this handsome and young one whom we see? He is like a bull among men. His shoulders are as large as that of a lion. I have not seen a man like him before. He is like the sun. Though I have been reflecting, I am unable to determine correctly the intentions of this bull among men." Pandava then approached Virata. The great-minded one spoke in words that seemed to be despondent. "O Indra among men! I am a cook named Ballava. Appoint me and I will cook you supreme dishes." Virata replied, "You are one who offers honour. I do not believe that you are a cook. You seem to be the equal of the thousand-eyed one,[54] in your radiance, your beauty and your valour. O son![55] You are radiant and supreme among men." Bhima said, "O Indra among men! I am a cook and your servant. I only know the best of dishes. O king! In earlier times, King Yudhishthira used to taste all of them. There is no one who is equal to me in strength. O king! I have always been skilled at wrestling. O unblemished one! I will bring you pleasure by fighting with elephants and lions." Virata replied, "I grant you the boon that you will be employed in the kitchen. You will work there, since you have said that you possess those skills. However, I do not think that this work is appropriate

for you. You deserve the entire earth, girded by the ocean. But let it be the way you desire. You will be appointed the chief chef in the kitchen, heading the men who have been appointed there earlier by me." Thus Bhima was instated in the kitchen. He became a great favourite of King Virata's. O king! While he lived there, no one, not even the servants, got to know who he was.'

604(8)

Vaishampayana said, 'Then the unblemished Krishna braided her hair, with curls at the tips. The mild and dark-eyed one hid it on the right side and donned a garment that was long, dark and extremely dirty. She thus assumed the garb of a sairandhri and began to roam around, as if she was in great trouble. On seeing her wandering around, men and women rushed to her and asked, "Who are you and what do you desire?" O Indra among kings! She then told them, "I am a sairandhri. I have come here, wishing to work for anyone who will feed me." On seeing her beauty, her attire and the gentleness of her speech, they did not believe that she was a maidservant who had come in search of food.

'Virata's wife was the daughter of Kekaya and was greatly honoured. She looked down from the palace and beheld Drupada's daughter. On seeing her in that state, without a protector and clad in a single piece of garment, she summoned her and said, "O fortunate one! Who are you and what do you wish to do?" O Indra among kings! She told her,[56] "I am a sairandhri and I have arrived here in search of work. I will work for anyone who feeds me." Sudeshna[57] replied, "O beautiful one! Those you speak of[58] do not possess the beauty you have. Those like you have many and varied servant maids and servants. Your ankles are concealed. Your thighs are firm. You are deep in three places[59] and high in six.[60] You are red in the five places that should be red.[61] Your voice is as slow as that of a swan. You have beautiful hair and beautiful breasts. You are dark.[62] Your buttocks and breasts are full. You are endowed with all the qualities, like a mare from Kashmira. Your eyelashes curl gracefully. Your lips are like *bimbas*.[63] You are slender at the waist. Your neck is lined like a conch shell. Your veins are hidden. Your face is like the full moon. O fortunate one! Tell me truthfully who you are. You cannot be a servant maid. Are you a *yakshi*, a goddess, a *gandharvi* or an *apsara*[64]—Alambusha, Mishrakeshi, Pundarika, Malini, Indrani, Varuni, or the consort of Tvashtra, Dhata or Prajapati?[65] These goddesses are famous among the gods. Which of these are you?"

'Droupadi replied, "I am not a goddess, or a gandharvi, or an *asuri*, or a *rakshasi*. I tell you truthfully that I am a sairandhri. I know how to dress hair and am skilful at grinding unguents. I can weave extremely beautiful and colourful garlands. I served Satyabhama, Krishna's beloved queen and Krishna,[66] the wife of the Pandus and the solitary beauty in the Kuru lineage. I go wherever I can obtain a good life. I am happy as long as I can obtain excellent garments. The goddess herself used to call me by the name of Malini.[67] O goddess! O Sudeshna! I have arrived thus in your house."

‘Sudeshna said, “There is no doubt that I can place you on my head, as long as the king does not desire you with all his heart and go to you. Behold! The ladies of the royal lineage and those who live in my abode are gazing at you with attachment. What man will you not infatuate? Behold! Even the trees that are established in my abode are bending down over you. What man will you not infatuate? When King Virata sees your superhuman beauty, with the beautiful buttocks and the beautiful hips, he will forsake me and go to you with all his heart. Your limbs are flawless. Your eyes are soft and long. O one with the beautiful smiles! On looking at you, any man who sees you will become attached and be overcome with desire. You are unblemished in all your limbs and he will come under the sway of the god of love. A she-crab conceives and brings about her own death.[68] O one with the beautiful smiles! I think that if I grant you residence, I will bring about my own destruction.”

‘Droupadi replied, “O beautiful one! Neither Virata, nor anyone else, can ever obtain me. I have five young gandharvas[69] as my husbands. They are the sons of a gandharva king who is extremely powerful. They always protect me. Any conduct that brings me grief ensures destruction. My gandharva husbands allow me to live in a house where I am not served any leftover food and where I am not asked to wash anyone’s feet. If any man desires me, like any other common woman, before the night is over, he will enter another body.[70] O beautiful one! No one is capable of making me stray. Those powerful gandharvas always protect me from unhappiness.”

‘Sudeshna said, “O beloved one! I will then offer you residence, according to your desires. You will not wash the feet of others. Nor will you ever eat leftover food.”’

Vaishampayana said, ‘Krishna was thus comforted by Virata’s wife. O Janamejaya! No one there got to know who she actually was.’

605(9)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Having donned the supreme garments of a cowherd, Sahadeva also arrived. He adopted their language and presented himself before Virata. The king saw that resplendent bull among men arriving, and advancing towards the descendant of the Kuru lineage, asked him, “Whom do you belong to and where have you come from? O son![71] What do you wish for? O bull among men! Tell me truthfully. I have not seen you before.” When he arrived before the king, Sahadeva, the destroyer of enemies, spoke in a voice that was as deep as the clouds. “I am a vaishya by the name of Arishtanemi. I used to number the cows for the bulls among the Kurus. O supreme one on earth! I wish to reside with you. I do not know where the Parthas, lions among kings, are. I know of no other means of livelihood. O king! I will not find pleasure in serving anyone other than you.” Virata replied, “You must be a brahmana or a kshatriya. You are as handsome as a lord of the earth, with the frontiers of the ocean. O destroyer of enemies! Tell me the truth. The duties of a vaishya are not appropriate for you. From

what king's kingdom have you arrived here? What kind of craftsmanship do you wish to pursue? In what capacity will you always reside with us? Tell me what salary you wish to be paid." Sahadeva said, "King Yudhishthira is the eldest among the five sons of Pandu. He possessed herds of eight hundred, one thousand, ten thousand, another ten thousand and another twenty thousand cows. I was the one who numbered his cows and I was known by the name of Tantipala. Nothing is unknown to me about numbering—the past, the present and the future, and within a distance of ten *yojanas*.[72] The great-souled one, Yudhishthira, king of the Kuru lineage, was well acquainted with my skills and was always satisfied with me. I know how cattle can be multiplied swiftly and how one ensures that they never suffer from disease. These types of skills have always been known to me. Such craftsmanship has always been established in me. O king! I know the auspicious marks of bulls, the smell of whose urine makes barren cows give birth." Virata replied, "I possess one hundred thousand. They have been classified according to colours and other qualities that are yet undetected. I put you in charge of the animals and the herdsmen. Henceforth, let my animals be in your care." O lord of the earth! Thus, unknown to the king, that supreme among men lived there happily. No one else found out who he was. He was also paid a salary, according to his wishes.'

606(10)

Vaishampayana said, 'Then another handsome one made his appearance. He was a giant man, but was adorned in the ornaments of women. He wore earrings that were as large as walls and turrets, made out of long and beautiful conch shells adorned with gold. His long and abundant hair was combed. He was mighty-armed and his valour was like that of an elephant. The earth trembled as he advanced. He approached Virata, who was seated in his assembly hall, an oppressor of enemies who had disguised himself. However, his supreme radiance was dazzling. This was the son of the great Indra, and like a king of elephants in his valour. On seeing him arrive in the assembly hall, the king asked all those who were nearby, "Where has he come from? I have not heard of him before." But none of the men there said that they knew him. In amazement, the king spoke these words. "You are a beautiful man and have all the endowments. You are dark and young and are equal to the leader of a herd of elephants. You wear beautiful conch shells that are adorned with gold. You have loosened your hair in a braid and are adorned with earrings. Your hair is peaked and abundant. But your attire seems to be wrong. You must be an archer, with armour and arrows. Climb onto a swift vehicle. Be like my sons, or like me myself. I am an old man now and wish to ease my burdens. Swiftly protect the entire region of Matsya. Someone with your form cannot be a eunuch. It seems to my mind that there is no way this can be true."

'Arjuna replied, "I sing, dance and play musical instruments. I am excellent in dancing and skilled in singing. O god among men! Give me Uttara.[73] I will myself be

the dancer to that goddess. There is no point in recounting how I came by this form. It will only increase my misery. O god among men! Know my name to be Brihannada. I have been abandoned by my father and my mother as a son and a daughter."[74]

'Virata said, "O Brihannada! I will grant you the boon that you have asked for. Instruct my daughter, and others like her, in dance. I do not think that such a duty befits you. You deserve the entire earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having tested Brihannada in dancing, music and other arts, and on determining that he was a eunuch, the king of Matsya permitted him to enter the quarters of the princess. Lord Dhananjaya instructed Virata's daughter in singing and music, as well as her friends and attendants. Pandava became very dear to them. Self-controlled Dhananjaya lived there in disguise and did what pleased them. No one there, outside or in the inner quarters, got to know about him.'

607(11)

Vaishampayana said, 'Then another lordly Pandava was seen to approach King Virata, when he was inspecting his horses. As he arrived, the people saw him, like the disc of the sun freed from behind the clouds. He began to examine the horses that were in every direction. On seeing him engaged in examining, the king of Matsya, the destroyer of enemies, spoke to his attendants thus. "This man is an equal of the immortals. Where has he come from? He is examining my horses with great thoroughness. It is certain that he is skilled in the knowledge of horses. Let him swiftly be brought before me. This brave one's appearance is like that of an immortal." The destroyer of enemies[75] now spoke to the king. "O king! O fortunate one! May you be victorious. O king! I have always been esteemed because of my knowledge of horses. I will become the skilled charioteer of your horses." Virata replied, "I will give you vehicles, riches and a house. You deserve to be the charioteer of my horses. But where have you come from and whom do you belong to? Why have you come here? Tell me about the arts that are known to you."[76] Nakula said, "King Yudhishthira is the eldest of the five sons of Pandu. O destroyer of enemies! I was earlier employed as the tender of his horses. I know the nature of horses and everything about subduing them. I can control wicked ones and I know everything about healing them. No steed that belongs to me is ever timid. No mare of mine is wicked, not to speak of stallions. People, and Pandava Yudhishthira, knew me by the name of Granthika." Virata replied, "From today, let all the horses and mounts that I possess be entrusted to your care. Let all my charioteers, and all those who yoke horses, be subordinate to you from now on. O one who is like the gods! Tell me what you wish for. What kind of salary do you desire? The tending of horses does not become you. It seems to me that you are as radiant as a king. To me, your appearance is as pleasant as that of Yudhishthira himself. How can the Pandava[77] find any pleasure dwelling in the forest, without any servants?" Thus the young one, who

was like the best of the gandharvas, was happily honoured by King Virata. No one got to know about him and he roamed around, making himself agreeable. Thus did the Pandavas, whose sight always bore fruit, dwell in Matsya, following the pledge that they had given. They lived a careful life of concealment. But the lords of the earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean, were extremely miserable.'

608(12)

Janamejaya asked, 'O brahmana! While the Pandavas resided in the city of Matsya, what did the extremely valorous Pandavas do?'

Vaishampayana said, 'While the descendants of the Kuru lineage lived there in disguise, honoured by the king, listen to what they did. O lord of the earth! As a courtier, Yudhishthira became the beloved of others in the assembly, as well as of Virata and his son. Pandava knew the heart of the dice and played with the dice as he pleased, as if they were birds tied to a string. Unknown to Virata, Dharmaraja, tiger among men, distributed the riches that he won among his brothers, to each one according to what he deserved. Bhimasena sold Yudhishthira meat and other kinds of food that were given by Matsya. Arjuna sold the old garments that he obtained from the inner quarters and passed on all the proceeds to the Pandavas. Pandava Sahadeva assumed the attire of a cowherd. He gave the Pandavas curds, milk and ghee. Because of his duties with the horses, Nakula satisfied the lord of men[78] and obtained riches. He gave this to the Pandavas. The ascetic Krishna looked after all the brothers. The beautiful one acted so that they might remain undetected. O lord of men! Thus the *maharathas*[79] looked after each other, living in disguise, but looking after Krishna.

'There was a great festival of austerities in Matysa in the fourth month.[80] Men honoured it and celebrated it with great expense. O king! Thousands of wrestlers arrived there from all the directions. They were gigantic in size and immensely valorous, like Kalakhanja *asuras*.[81] They were insolent of their valour and were proud of their strength and were honoured by the king. Their shoulders, waists and necks were like those of lions. They were free from dirt and were in great spirits. Before the king, they had been victorious and honoured in the arena earlier. There was a gigantic one among them and he challenged all the wrestlers. As he strode around the arena, not a single one dared to take him on. When all the other wrestlers were despondent and had lost their spirits, the king of Matsya asked his cook to fight with the wrestler. Thus instructed, Bhima was unable to refuse the king in public and unhappily made up his mind.[82] That tiger among men entered the giant arena with the light gait of a tiger and brought delight to Virata. To the delight of the assembly, Kounteya girded himself. Bhima then challenged the wrestler, who was like Vritra[83] himself. Both of them were extremely energetic and both of them were terrible in their valour. They were intoxicated, like giant elephants that were sixty years old. Bhima, the destroyer of enemies, grasped the roaring wrestler and

tugged him with his arms. He also roared like a tiger seizing an elephant. Then the mighty-armed and brave Bhima raised the wrestler up and whirled him around, to the supreme amazement of the other wrestlers and the residents of Matsya. Having whirled him around a hundred times, until he lost his mind and his senses, the mighty-armed Vrikodara flung him down on the ground. The brave Jimuta,[84] famous in the world, was thus slain. Together with his relatives, Virata was greatly delighted. In his joy, the great-minded king gave a lot of riches to Ballava in that great arena, like Vaishravana.[85] After having defeated a large number of wrestlers and immensely strong men in the same way, he obtained the supreme of favours from the king of Matsya. No other man could be found who was a match for him. He was then made to fight with tigers, lions and elephants. In the presence of the women from the inner quarters, Virata repeatedly made Vrikodara fight with angry lions that were extremely powerful.

'Pandava Bibhatsu satisfied Virata and all the women from the inner quarters with his singing and his excellent dancing. O supreme among kings! Nakula satisfied the king with the trained and swift steeds that he assembled there. On seeing Sahadeva's trained bulls, the king was delighted and gave him a lot of riches. Thus did those bulls among men live there in disguise. They performed various duties for King Virata.'

Section Forty-Six

Kichaka-Vadha Parva

This section has 353 shlokas and eleven chapters.

Chapter 609(13): 21 shlokas
Chapter 610(14): 21 shlokas
Chapter 611(15): 41 shlokas
Chapter 612(16): 16 shlokas
Chapter 613(17): 29 shlokas
Chapter 614(18): 36 shlokas
Chapter 615(19): 30 shlokas
Chapter 616(20): 34 shlokas
Chapter 617(21): 67 shlokas
Chapter 618(22): 30 shlokas
Chapter 619(23): 28 shlokas

Vadha *means to kill and is also the act of slaying. Kichaka is Virata's general and Sudeshna's brother and lusts after Droupadi. Kichaka is killed by Bhima, which explains the name of this section.*

609(13)

Vaishampayana said, 'The maharatha Parthas lived in disguise in the city of Matsya and ten months elapsed. O lord of the earth! O Janamejaya! Yajnaseni[1] lived there in great unhappiness, serving Sudeshna, though she deserved to be served herself. Virata's general saw the lotus-eyed Panchali roaming around in Sudeshna's abode. As soon as he saw her roaming around like a goddess, like a daughter of the gods, Kichaka[2] desired her and was oppressed by the arrows of love. Burning with the fire of desire, the general went to Sudeshna and smilingly said, "I have not seen this beautiful one in Virata's abode earlier. This beautiful one's form intoxicates me, like scent generated from liquor. O beautiful one! Who is this one who steals the heart, with the form of a goddess? O beautiful one! Where has she come from and whom does she belong to? She oppresses my mind and has brought me under her control. I think that there is no medicine that can cure me now. Behold! It seems to me that your beautiful serving maid possesses extreme beauty. It is not fitting that she should work for you. She should command me and everything that I possess. Let her grace my beautiful and grand residence, with all its many elephants, horses, chariots, great riches and opulence, with a lot of food and drink and with its handsome gold and colourful adornments." After consulting Sudeshna, Kichaka went to the daughter of the king[3] and spoke to Krishna in a comforting voice, like a jackal confronting a queen of deer[4] in the forest. "O beautiful one! Your supreme form and your youth are useless if you are alone, like a beautiful garland that is not

worn. O beautiful one! Though you are handsome, you are lacking in radiance. O one with the beautiful smile! I will give up the wives I have had before. O beautiful one! I will station myself as your servant. O one with the beautiful face! I will always be under your control."

'Droupadi replied, "O son of a *suta*![5] You desire me. But I am not one who should be coveted. I am a sairandhri, born from an inferior lineage. I am terrible to look at and I perform the duty of dressing hair. O fortunate one! I am another one's wife. This conduct is beneath you. Wives are loved by all beings. Think of what is dharma. In no way should your mind turn towards another one's wife. Men who are good in their vows always avoid that which should be abhorred. Men who are evil-souled and overcome by delusion covet that which should not be coveted and attain ill fame. They confront grave danger. O son of a suta! Do not rejoice. Otherwise, you may lose your life today, by desiring that which is difficult to obtain. I am protected by brave ones. I cannot be obtained by you. My husbands are gandharvas. They will be angered and will kill you. Cease and do not bring about your own destruction. You desire to traverse a path that men cannot walk on. You are like a stupid child who is on a bank and wants to cross over to the other bank. You may enter the earth, or you may rise up into the sky. You may flee to the furthest shore of the ocean. But you will not be able to free yourself from them. My husbands are the powerful sons of the gods. O Kichaka! You firmly desire me now, as if you are ill and the night of your death has arrived. You desire me, like a child who is asleep on his mother's lap and wishes to obtain the moon."'

610(14)

Vaishampayana said, 'Having been thus turned down by the princess, Kichaka was overcome by a terrible lust that could not be controlled. He went to Sudeshna and told her, "O Kaikeyi![6] Act so that I can be united with Sairandhri. O Sudeshna! Otherwise, I will give up my life." Hearing his many lamentations, the goddess who was Virata's queen felt compassion for him. She debated in her mind and thought about what would best serve her purpose, regarding Krishna. Sudeshna then told the suta, "Have some liquor and food prepared for the festive day. On that day, I will send her to you, asking her to fetch some liquor for me. Thus sent, without any obstructions, you can try to seduce her in private, comforting her according to your desires and uniting with her, if she agrees." Hearing these words of his sister, Kichaka returned home. He procured supremely refined liquor, fit to be served to a king. He made his excellent cooks prepare the meat of goat and lambs, large quantities of the meat of deer and supreme food and drink.

'Once this was done, having been informed by Kichaka, Queen Sudeshna sent Sairandhri to Kichaka's residence. Sudeshna said, "O Sairandhri! Arise and go to Kichaka's house. O fortunate one! I am overcome by thirst. Go and fetch me something

to drink.” Droupadi replied, “O princess! I will not go to his residence. O queen! You know that he has no shame. O one with the unblemished limbs! O beautiful one! I will not be addicted to desire in your house and I will not be unfaithful to my husbands. O goddess! O beautiful one! You know about the conditions I set when I entered your house earlier. O one with the beautiful hair! Kichaka is a fool and is insolent with desire. On seeing me, he will cause me dishonour. O beautiful one! I will not go there. O princess! You have many other servant maids who follow your instructions. O fortunate one! Send one of them instead. It is certain that he will dishonour me.” Sudeshna replied, “If you have been sent by me, he will not cause any violence to you.” With these words, she gave her a golden goblet with a cover. Anxious and weeping and seeking protection with fate, she left for Kichaka’s house to fetch the liquor. Droupadi said, “If it is true that I do not know anyone other than the Pandus, then through that truth, let Kichaka not be able to overpower me when I reach that place.” Then the weak one worshipped Surya[7] for an instant. Surya got to know everything from the slender-waisted one and instructed an invisible rakshasa to protect her. Under no circumstances was the rakshasa supposed to leave the side of the unblemished one.

‘On seeing Krishna approach like a frightened doe, the suta arose, as if one wishing to cross a river has found a boat.’

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‘Kichaka said, “O one with the beautiful hair! Welcome. My night has happily turned into day. I have obtained you as my mistress. Do what brings me pleasure. Let them bring golden garlands, conch shells, earrings made out of gold, silken garments and other skins. I have arranged that a divine bed should be spread out for you. Come with me there and drink the honeyed liquor.”

‘Droupadi replied, “The princess has sent me to you to fetch liquor. She told me she was thirsty and I should quickly fetch her something to drink.”

‘Kichaka said, “Some other fortunate one will take refined liquor to the princess.”’

Vaishampayana said, ‘Having said this, the suta’s son grasped her by the right hand. Having been thus seized, she threw Kichaka down on the floor. She rushed to the assembly hall where King Yudhishthira was seated and sought protection. Kichaka pursued the fleeing one and grasped her by the hair. While the king looked on, he flung her down and kicked her with his foot. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! However, the rakshasa who had been employed by the sun god pushed Kichaka away with the force of the wind. Struck by the strength of the rakshasa, he fell down on the ground. He was whirled around and was motionless, like a tree that has been uprooted. Both Bhimasena and Yudhishthira were seated there and looked on. They could not bear the sight of Krishna being kicked by Kichaka. The great-minded Bhima wished to kill the evil-minded Kichaka and gnashed his teeth in anger. O king! But Dharmaraja restrained

Bhima by pressing his thumb with his own.[8]

'Drupada's daughter was weeping and clung to the door of the assembly hall. The one with the beautiful hips glanced at her husbands, whose appearances were dejected. She was also bent on protecting the pledge they had taken in the name of dharma. With terrible eyes that seemed to burn down, she told Matsya, "The son of a suta has kicked me with his foot. I am the revered wife of those whose enemies do not dare to sleep when they traverse the earth. The son of a suta has kicked me with his foot. I am the revered wife of those who give and do not ask, those who are truthful and are like brahmanas. The son of a suta has kicked me with his foot. I am the revered wife of those whose war drums and bow twangs are continually heard. The son of a suta has kicked me with his foot. I am the revered wife of those who are energetic and self-controlled, who are powerful and extremely proud. The son of a suta has kicked me with his foot. I am the revered wife of those who, had they not been bound by the noose of dharma, are capable of destroying the entire world. They provide succour to those who seek refuge. They are roaming the world in disguise. Where are those maharathas now? Those powerful and infinitely energetic ones are suffering like eunuchs, while their beloved and chaste wife is tortured by the son of a suta. Where is their intolerance? Where do their valour and energy flow? They cannot protect their wife from being tortured by an evil-minded one. What can I possibly do with Virata, when dharma is being reviled? He witnesses an innocent one being tortured, but tolerates it. O king! You are not acting like a king in your treatment of Kichaka. Your dharma is that of a *dasyu*[9] and is not deserving of an assembly hall. I do not see any adherence to one's own dharma in Kichaka, or in Matsya. It seems to me that the courtiers are also oblivious of dharma. O King Virata! I will not censure you in this assembly of people. O Matsya! But it is not right that I should be tortured in your presence. The courtiers have witnessed that Kichaka is being treated as an exception." Virata replied, "I do not know anything about your quarrel, since that occurred outside my sight. Unless I know the truth, how can I judge skilfully?" Having learnt what had happened, those present in the assembly honoured Krishna a lot. They congratulated her and condemned Kichaka. The courtiers said, "The man who possesses this long-eyed one with the unblemished limbs as a wife, has obtained the supreme and need not sorrow over anything." The courtiers saw Krishna and honoured her in this fashion.

'Because of anger, there were drops of perspiration on Yudhishthira's forehead. Kouravya spoke to the princess who was his beloved queen. "O Sairandhri! Do not stay here. Go to Sudeshna's abode. The wives of brave ones suffer on account of their husbands. Though suffering, they conquer the worlds of their husbands through their servitude. I think that your husbands do not see this as a time for anger. Therefore, the gandharvas, who are like the sun in their energy, are not rushing to help you. O Sairandhri! You do not know that this is not the right time and are prancing around like

a dancing girl. You are disturbing the Matsyas, who are gambling in the king's assembly hall. O Sairandhri! Depart and the gandharvas will act so as to bring you pleasure." Droupadi replied, "I follow dharma for the sake of those who are extremely tolerant. If the eldest one is addicted to dice,[10] anyone can oppress them." Having spoken these words, Krishna rushed to Sudeshna's residence. The one with the beautiful hips had her hair flowing freely and her eyes were red with anger. When she stopped crying, her face was like the lunar disc in the sky, freed from a net of clouds. Sudeshna asked, "O one with the lovely hips! O beautiful one! Who has oppressed you and why are you crying? O fortunate one! Whose happiness will end today and who has acted towards you in an unpleasant way?" Droupadi replied, "Kichaka kicked me when I went to fetch liquor for you. The king looked on in the assembly hall, as if this had occurred in private." Sudeshna replied, "O one with the beautiful hair! If you so think, I will have Kichaka killed. He has been intoxicated by desire and has lusted for one who is not obtainable." Droupadi said, "He has caused injury to others and they will kill him. I think it is certain that he will go today to the world beyond."'

612(16)

Vaishampayana said, 'Having been kicked by the son of a suta, the beautiful princess Krishna blazed forth and planned the general's death. Drupada's daughter then went to her own residence and having purified herself, the slender-waisted Krishna washed her body and her garments with water. Weeping, she thought about how she might emerge from her misery. "What will I do? Where will I go? How will my task be accomplished?" While she was thinking in this way, Bhima surfaced in her mind. "Other than Bhima, no one can act so as to bring pleasure to my mind." She arose from her bed in the night. The spirited and chaste Krishna possessed a protector. Afflicted with great grief in her mind, the sweet-smiling Panchali swiftly went to Bhimasena in the kitchen, like a three-year old cow born in the forest approaches a bull, or a she-elephant approaches a large bull-elephant. She was like a creeper embracing a large and flowering *sala* tree[11] on the banks of the Gomati, like the wife of the king of animals[12] waking up a sleeping lion in the deserted forest. Unblemished Panchali spoke to Bhimasena in words that were as sweet as a veena uttering *gandhara* notes.[13] "O Bhimasena! Arise! Arise! How can you sleep as if you are dead? The evil one, who molested the wife of someone who is not dead, is still alive. My enemy, the evil-doing general, is still alive." Awoken by the princess, Kouravya arose from his bed and seated himself on a couch covered with cushions, looking like a monsoon cloud. He asked his beloved queen, "Why have you come to me in this hurried fashion? Your complexion is not natural. You appear to be pale and wan. Tell me everything in detail, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, agreeable or disagreeable, so that I know. Having heard everything, I will decide what should be done next. O Krishna! I am trusted by you in all deeds. I have repeatedly

saved you from all dangers. Quickly tell me what you desire, what task needs to be done. Then return to your bed before the others arise."'

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'Droupadi said, "How can a woman, who has Yudhishthira as a husband, not be sorrowful? You know all my miseries. Why are you asking me? O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It burns me that an usher dragged me to an assembly hall, in the midst of the courtiers, calling me a servant maid. O lord! Which other daughter of a king, but for Droupadi, would wish to live like me, after enduring such miseries? When dwelling in the forest, who else but me would endure being molested a second time by the evil-minded Saindhava?[14] Barring me, who else can bear to be alive after having been kicked by Kichaka with his feet, in the presence of the king of Matsya and while that gamester looked on?[15] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I have been tormented by several miseries like these. O Kounteya! Don't you know them? How does it profit me to be alive? O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O tiger among men! The evil-minded Kichaka is King Virata's general and brother-in-law. While I dwell in the king's residence in the disguise of Sairandhri, the evil-minded one incessantly addresses me, asking me to be his wife. O destroyer of enemies! Thus addressed by one who deserves to be killed, my heart is bursting out, like a fruit that time has ripened.

'"You should censure your elder brother, who is addicted to gambling. It is because of his deeds that I confront these unending calamities. Who else but him, addicted to gambling, would give up his kingdom, all his possessions and his own self, so as to spend a life in the forest? If he had played from morning till evening for many years and wagered property worth one thousand *nishkas*[16] each time, there would have been no decrease in the value of his golden ornaments, golden coins,[17] garments, vehicles, teams of animals, goats, sheep, horses and mules. Under the guise of a gambling match, he has been dislodged from all his prosperity. He is now silent like a stupid person, reflecting about his own deeds. When he went out, ten thousand elephants, garlanded with gold and bearing the marks of lotuses, followed him. He now earns a livelihood through dice. A hundred thousand infinitely energetic men showed homage to the great king Yudhishthira in Indraprastha. A hundred thousand servant maids always served him in the kitchen, with plates in their hands, serving guests morning and night. The supreme among generous ones gave away a thousand nishkas. He is now confronted with this great calamity because of his gambling. Many bards and minstrels, with beautiful voices and adorned with decorated and bejewelled earrings, showed him homage in the morning and the evening. One thousand rishis were always seated in his assembly hall. They were rich in austerities and learning and all their wishes were attended to. Without any distraction, he supported the blind, the aged, the unprotected and the destitute of the kingdom. Yudhishthira was always devoted to non-violence. He

has now found hell as Matsya's servant. Yudhishthira calls himself Kanka, the gambler in the king's assembly hall. At the time when he lived in Indraprastha, all the kings brought him tribute. He now seeks a salary from others. He was a protector of the earth and all the kings were under his suzerainty. The king has now lost his powers and is under someone else's control. Like the one with the rays,[18] he dazzled the entire earth with his energy. But that Yudhishthira is now a gambler in King Virata's court. O Pandava! Behold that Pandava! He was one whom kings honoured in his assembly hall, accompanied by the rishis. He is now seated below another. The immensely wise one now seeks livelihood from another. Who will not suffer on seeing the undeserving Yudhishthira, with dharma in his soul, thus? The entire earth served that brave one in his assembly hall. He is now seated below another. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Behold that descendant of the Bharata lineage! I am now like an unprotected one, having suffered from many such misfortunes. I am now in the midst of an ocean of grief. O Bhima! Do you not see?"'

614(18)

'Droupadi said, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I will now tell you about my great unhappiness. I am telling you this out of great misery and you should not be angry with me. I am bereft of my senses when you fight with tigers, buffaloes and lions in the inner quarters and Kaikeyi[19] watches you. On seeing me unconscious, Kaikeyi will arise and tell her women, 'I think this affection is born out of this sweet-smiling one living with the cook and she sorrows when he fights with these immensely brave beings. Sairandhri is beautiful in form and Ballava is extremely handsome. The minds of women are impossible to fathom. But it seems to me that they are made for each other. Sairandhri is always overcome by pity because they happily live together. They have lived in this royal household for the same duration of time.' Through such words, she always makes me known. When she sees me angered, she suspects that I am attached to you. When she utters such words, I am overtaken by great grief. I am immersed in sorrow over Yudhishthira and I cannot bear to be alive.

'"Alone on a single chariot, he defeated gods, men and serpents. That youthful one is now a dancing master for King Virata's daughter. The one with the infinite soul satisfied the fire god in Khandava. Partha has now gone to the inner quarters, like a fire covered in a well. He was a bull among men and enemies were always frightened of him. Dhananjaya is now in a form that is despised by the world. Enemies trembled at the twang of his bow and the slapping of his palms. He now pleases women with the sweet sounds of his singing. A diadem that was like the sun always adorned his head. Dhananjaya's unkempt hair is now braided. All the celestial weapons are known to that great-souled one. He is the repository of all knowledge and now wears earrings. Thousands of kings, whose energy was unlimited, could not cross him and overcome him

in battle, just as the great ocean does not cross the shoreline. That youthful one is now a dancing master for King Virata's daughter. He hides himself in disguise and serves the daughter. O Bhima! The earth, with its mountains and forests and mobile and immobile objects, trembled at the roar of his chariot. He is the immensely fortunate one whose birth destroyed Kunti's sorrow. O Bhimasena! I now sorrow over your younger brother. He is adorned in golden ornaments and earrings and sports conch shells in his hands.[20] On seeing him approach, my mind is immersed in sorrow. O Bhima! The archer Dhananjaya wears his unkempt hair in a braid. O Bhima! On seeing him surrounded by young maidens, my mind is immersed in sorrow. He is equal to a god. When I see Partha surrounded by young maidens, in the midst of musical instruments, like a bull-elephant in rut surrounded by she-elephants, and in the service of Virata, king of the Matsyas, who pays him, I can no longer see any of the directions. Surely the *arya*[21] does not know the difficulties Dhananjaya has to confront, or those that Ajatashatru[22] is immersed in, having become addicted to evil gambling.

'"The youngest Sahadeva is a lord of warriors. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On seeing him tend to cattle, in the disguise of a cowherd, I become pale. O mighty-armed one! I repeatedly reflect upon Sahadeva's conduct. Truth is his valour. But I do not know of any evil act that Sahadeva has done, as a consequence of which, he should attain such unhappiness. O best of the Bharata lineage! On seeing your beloved brother, appointed by Matsya, like a bull among the cattle, fever overcomes me. He is clad in red garments and he is foremost among the cowherds. He shows homage to Virata. Arya[23] always praised brave Sahadeva because of his honoured reputation, his conduct and his virtuous nature. 'He is modest, sweet in speech, devoted to dharma and dear to me. O Yajnaseni! Comfort him in the forest, even at night.' O best of warriors! O Pandava! On seeing Sahadeva engaged with cows, covering himself with calf skins at night, how can I bear to live?

'"He[24] always possessed the three qualities of beauty, weaponry and intelligence. He now tends to Virata's steeds. Behold! How times have changed! The great king looks and the assembled populace watches when Damagranthi[25] trains horses and drives them swiftly. I have seen him wait upon the prosperous Virata of Matsya, supreme in his radiance, showing off the horses. O Partha! O scorcher of enemies! How can you think that I will be happy? Because of Yudhishthira, I am afflicted with a hundred different kinds of miseries. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! There are other miseries too, greater than these. O Kounteya! Listen and I will tell you about them. These many types of unhappiness are drying up my body. What can be a greater misery than that? And all of this is happening while you are still alive."'

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'Droupadi said, "Because of the crafty one who is addicted to dice, I roam around in the

king’s residence in the form of a sairandhri, washing for Sudeshna. O scorcher of enemies! I am a princess. Look at the extreme and improper acts I perform. Like a diseased one, I am waiting for the time when all my difficulties will be over. For mortals, it is said that prosperity, success, victory and defeat are only transient. Thinking of this, I am waiting for my husbands to arise again. That which leads to a man’s victory may lead to his defeat too. I am waiting for that. Men give and beg, kill and are killed, in that order. I have heard that they kill, and are then killed by enemies. There is nothing that is too heavy for destiny. Nor can destiny ever be transgressed. Therefore, I am waiting for destiny to manifest itself. Where there was no water earlier, there may be water again.[26] Thinking of this reversal, I am waiting for us to arise again. If one is not successful because of destiny, even though affairs have been conducted well, it is said that learned ones should endeavour to make destiny turn favourable. I will tell you the reason behind my words, whether you ask me or do not ask me. I am immersed in grief and I will tell you. I am the queen of the sons of Pandu and the daughter of Drupada. Having attained such a plight, who but me would wish to live? O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O destroyer of enemies! These sorrows that I have been overtaken by, bring disgrace to all the Kurus, the Panchalas and the Pandavyas. I am sustained by many brothers, fathers-in-law and sons. What woman, other than me, can bear to be so unhappy? In my childhood, I must have performed an act to displease the creator. O bull among the Bharata lineage! His ill favours have brought me this misfortune. O Pandava! Look at the pallor of my complexion, the likes of which I have not had, even in the worst of difficulties. O Bhima! O Partha! You know how happy I used to be earlier. I have now become a servant maid. I am helpless and can find no peace.

‘“I think it cannot be anything other than fate. The mighty-armed Partha Dhananjaya, whose bow is terrible, has been pacified, like a fire that is covered. O Partha![27] It is impossible for men to comprehend the fate of beings. I know that this downfall of ours could not have been thought of earlier. You are the likes of Indra and you have always glanced at my face. I am supreme among women. But you now look towards the faces of those who are inferior. O Pandava! Look at my plight, something that I did not deserve. Though all of you are alive, look at how times have changed. The entire earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean, was under my control. I am frightened of Sudeshna and am under her control. Earlier, I used to have servants before me and behind me. But I now walk before Sudeshna and follow her at the back. O Kounteya! Listen to another misery that I find to be insufferable. I have never before had to grind unguents, not even for my own self—only for Kunti. O fortunate one! I now have to grind sandalwood. O Kounteya! Look at my hands. They have never looked like this earlier.”’

Vaishampayana said, ‘Having said this, she showed him both her calloused hands.

‘Droupadi said, “I was never scared of Kunti, or any one of you. But I now stand like a

servant maid before Virata, always terrified. 'What will the emperor tell me? Have I prepared the unguents properly? Perhaps Matysa will not like sandalwood when it has been ground by others.'"'

Vaishampayana said, 'Narrating her miseries to Bhimasena, the beautiful Krishna wept silently and glanced towards Bhimasena. Her voice was choked with tears. She sighed repeatedly. Bhimasena's heart was shattered and she said, "O Bhima! In earlier times, the offence that I have caused to the gods cannot have been trifling. O Pandava! I am unfortunate that I continue to be alive, when I should be dead." Vrikodara, the destroyer of enemy warriors, then placed the swollen and calloused hands of the trembling one against his face and began to weep. The valorous Kounteya grasped them. Extremely miserable, and in a voice choked with tears, he spoke these words.'

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'Bhimasena said, "Shame on the strength of my arms and on Phalguna's[28] Gandiva! Your hands used to be red earlier, but are now covered in callouses. I would have created a great uproar in Virata's assembly hall, but Dharmaraja restrained me with a glance. O beautiful one! Knowing his intentions, I controlled myself. That we have been dislodged from the kingdom, that I have not killed the Kurus, Suyodhana, Karna and Soubala Shakuni, that I have not sliced off the evil Duhshasana's head—all of these burn me, like stakes impaled in my heart. O fortunate one! Do not abandon dharma. O one with the beautiful hips! O immensely intelligent one! Conquer your anger. If King Yudhishthira hears this censure from you, he is certain to give up his life. O fortunate one! O one with the beautiful hips! O slender-waisted one! So will Dhananjaya and the twins. When they have gone to the other world, I will no longer be capable of being alive. O beautiful one! Sukanya, the daughter of Sharyati, followed Bhargava Chyavana, who had become a termite hill, into the forest, so as to pacify him.[29] You may have heard of the beauty of Nadayani Indrasena. In earlier times, she followed her aged husband, though he was one thousand years old.[30] You may have heard about Janaka's daughter, Vaidehi Sita. She followed her husband when he dwelt in the great forest.[31] Rama's beloved queen was molested by a rakshasa. Though she went through many difficulties, the one with the beautiful hips followed no one other than Rama. O timid one! Like that, Lopamudra possessed youth and beauty. By renouncing all the objects of desire that can be obtained by men, she followed Agastya.[32] O fortunate one! Just as these beautiful ladies[33] became famous because of their devotion to their husbands, you will also triumph because of all your qualities. Wait for a little more time. Only a month and a half is left. When thirteen years are completed, you will become a king's queen again."

'Droupadi replied, "O Bhima! I shed tears because I was suffering. I could not control my misery. I did not censure the king.[34] O Bhimasena! O mighty-armed one! One need not dwell over what is past. The present is here and it is time for you to act. O Bhima!

Kaikeyi is anxious that I surpass her in beauty. She is constantly worried that the king[35] might approach me. Knowing her intentions, the evil-minded Kichaka, knowing his own false intentions, always propositions me. He has angered me. O Bhima! But I have repeatedly controlled my anger. I have told Kichaka, who has lost control over his own soul because of lust, 'Protect yourself. I am the beloved wife and queen of five gandharvas. Those brave and invincible ones, who act out of courage, will slay you.' On being thus addressed, the evil-souled Kichaka replied, 'O Sairandhri! O one with the beautiful smiles! I am not frightened of gandharvas. I will kill a hundred, and a hundred thousand, gandharvas who are assembled in battle. O timid one! Give me a chance.' Thus addressed, I again spoke to the suta who was overtaken by lust. 'You do not have the strength to counter the famous gandharvas. I am born in a noble lineage and am virtuous in conduct. I have always been established in dharma. O Kichaka! I do not desire that anyone should be killed. That is the reason that you are still alive.' Thus addressed, the evil-souled one burst out in loud laughter. He does not stay on the right path. Nor does he follow dharma. The evil-souled one is evil in his sentiments and is overcome by lust and desire. The insolent and evil-souled one has been repulsed repeatedly. But whenever he sets sight on me, he molests me and I am certain to give up my life. While all of you seek to observe dharma, a great dharma is being destroyed. The wife must be protected at the appropriate time. If the wife is protected, the offspring are protected. If the offspring are protected, one's own self is protected. I have heard brahmanas speak about the dharma of different *varna*s.[36] There is no dharma for kshatriyas other than the destruction of enemies. While Dharmaraja looked on, Kichaka kicked me with his foot. O Bhimasena! O immensely strong one! It was in your sight too. It was you who protected me from the terrible Jatasura and together with your brothers, also from Jayadratha.[37] Kill the evil one who molests me in this way. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Because he is favoured by the king, he causes me grief. This one is overtaken by lust. Destroy him like an earthen pot against stone. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He is responsible for many of my miseries. If the sun rises tomorrow morning and he is alive, I will drink poison, rather than fall into Kichaka's clutches. O Bhimasena! It is better for me to die now, in front of you."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having said this, she clung to Bhima's chest and started to weep. Having embraced her, Bhima offered her great consolation. He thought of Kichaka in his mind and licked the corners of his mouth.'

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'Bhimasena said, "O fortunate one! O timid one! I will do what you have said. I will kill Kichaka today, together with all his relatives. O Yajnaseni! O one with the beautiful smiles! Discard your sorrow and grief. Tomorrow evening, set up a tryst with him. The king of the Matsyas has built a dancing hall. Maidens dance there during the day and

retire to their houses at night. O timid one! There is a divan there. It has been constructed well, with sturdy legs. There, I will show him his grandfathers who have died earlier. When you converse with him, make sure that no one sees you. O fortunate one! But act so that he goes there."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having thus talked and shed tears of sorrow, but bearing up their spirits, they waited for the night to be over. When the night had passed and it was dawn, Kichaka arose. He went to the royal palace and told Droupadi, "I kicked you with my foot in the assembly hall, in the king's sight. When someone stronger than you molested you, you could find no protector. It is said that Virata is the king of the Matsyas only in name. As a general of the army, I am the real king of the Matsyas. O timid one! Be happy and I will become your servant. O one with the beautiful hips! I will instantly give you one hundred nishkas. I will also give you one hundred servant maids and another one hundred servants. I will give you chariots drawn by she-mules. O timid one! Let us be united." Droupadi replied, "O Kichaka! I will agree. But you must accept a condition first. None of your friends or brothers must know that you have gone to unite with me. I am scared that the illustrious gandharvas may get to know. If you promise this, then I will come under your control." Kichaka said, "O one with the beautiful hips! I will do exactly as you have said. O fortunate one! I will go alone to your secluded house to unite with you. O one whose thighs are like plantain trees![38] I am crazy with desire for you. The gandharvas, as dazzling as the sun, will not be able to see you there." Droupadi replied, "There is a dancing hall that the king of the Matsyas has built, maidens dance there during the day and retire to their houses at night. Go there when it is dark and the gandharvas will not get to know. There is no doubt that we will then not be detected in sin."

'O king! Thinking of the conversation that she had had with Kichaka, the remaining half of the day seemed to be like an entire month. Kichaka went home, extremely delighted. The fool did not know that his death had arrived in the form of a sairandhri. He was fond of fragrances, ornaments and garlands. Intoxicated with love, he decorated himself with these. While he was doing these tasks, time seemed to be inordinately long. He thought about the one with the long eyes. Though he would soon be freed of all his prosperity, he seemed to increase in prosperity, like the wick of a burning lamp that is about to be extinguished. Kichaka was intoxicated with desire and completely trustful. He thought about the union and did not notice that the day was passing.

'Then Droupadi went to Bhima in the kitchen. The fortunate one seated herself next to Kouravya, her husband. The one with the beautiful hair spoke. "O scorcher of enemies! As you had said, I have fixed an assignation with Kichaka in the dancing hall. In the night, Kichaka will come to the deserted dancing hall alone. O mighty-armed one! Kill Kichaka. O Kounteya! Kichaka, the son of a suta, is intoxicated with insolence. O Pandava! When he goes to the dancing hall, rob him of his life. Because of his pride, the

son of a suta looks down on the gandharvas. You are supreme among warriors. Uproot him, like an elephant does a stalk. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Wipe away my tears of misery. O fortunate one! Salvage your own honour and that of your lineage." Bhimasena replied, "O one with the beautiful thighs! You are welcome. You have brought me pleasant news. O beautiful one! I will do that, without anyone else's aid. O beautiful one! The news of your assignation with Kichaka has brought me the same delight that I felt on killing Hidimba.[39] By my brothers and by dharma, I am truthfully pledging that I will kill Kichaka, the way the lord of the gods slew Vritra.[40] Whether in private, or in public, I will bring down Kichaka. It is certain that if the Matsyas get in the way, I will kill them too. I will then kill Duryodhana and regain the earth. Let Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, worship the Matsyas, if he so desires." Droupadi said, "O lord! O brave one! If you do not wish to deviate from the pledge you have taken on my account, bring down Kichaka in secret." Bhimasena replied, "O timid one! I will do exactly as you have said. O unblemished one! Today, I will remain invisible in the darkness. The evil-souled Kichaka craves for what cannot be obtained. I will crush his head, like an elephant does a *bilva* fruit."[41] Bhima went there first, hidden in the night, and seated himself, waiting for Kichaka, like an invisible lion waiting for deer.

'Kichaka adorned himself according to what pleased him. At the appointed hour, he arrived in the dancing hall, hoping to unite with Panchali. That room was enveloped in great darkness. Thinking this to be a sign, he entered. The infinitely energetic Bhima had already arrived there earlier and was stationed alone. The extremely evil-minded one went up to him, reclining on the divan and blazing in anger because of the molestation caused to Krishna, like death. Kichaka was intoxicated with lust and approached him. His heart filled with delight, he smilingly told him, "I have brought you a lot of riches of different kinds. All of this is for you and I have arrived quickly. The women who are in my household have suddenly begun to praise me, saying that there is no other man who is as well dressed and handsome as I am." Bhimasena replied, "It is my good fortune that you are so handsome and it is good fortune that you are praising yourself. I do not think that you have ever been caressed the way you are going to be caressed now." Having said this, the mighty-armed Kounteya Bhima, terrible in valour, leapt up and laughed at that worst of men. Bhima seized him by the hair, adorned with garlands and fragrances.

'Thus grasped forcibly by the hair, that supreme among strong ones freed his hair with his strength and grasped Pandava by the arms. A wrestling match started between those angry lions among men, like two powerful bull-elephants fighting over a she-elephant during the spring season. Though he was angry, Bhima reeled when the powerful Kichaka struck him and brought him down to the ground, on his knees. Having been thrown down on the ground by the powerful Kichaka, Bhima swiftly arose like a serpent that has been struck with a staff. The suta and Pandava were both insolent and proud of

their strength. The strong ones grappled in the dead of the night in that deserted place. That best of houses trembled repeatedly, when those strong and enraged ones roared at each other. Bhima struck the powerful one on the breast with the palm of his hand. But Kichaka, tormented by anger, did not budge by even a single step. For some time, the suta, oppressed by Bhima's strength, bore the force, impossible to bear on earth. But then his strength began to fade. On knowing that he was weakening, the immensely strong Bhimasena grasped him to his chest with force and pressed until he lost his senses. Vrikodara, supreme among victorious ones, was driven by wrath and was panting. He grasped Kichaka painfully by the hair. The immensely strong Bhima began to roar, like a tiger hungry for meat that has grasped a large deer. He forced his feet, his hands, his hand, his neck and all his limbs into his trunk, just as the wielder of the Pinaka once did with an animal.[42]

'Thus all the limbs were rendered into a mound of flesh. The immensely strong Bhimasena then showed this to Krishna. The greatly energetic one, descendant of the Pandu lineage, told Droupadi, "O Panchali! Behold! This is what has happened to the one driven by lust." Having thus killed Kichaka, his anger vanished and he was pacified. He took his leave of Krishna Droupadi and quickly returned to the kitchen. Having ensured that Kichaka was slain, Droupadi, supreme among women, was delighted and all her miseries disappeared. She told the guards of the assembly hall, "Kichaka has been killed by my gandharva husbands. He lusted after another one's wife. Come and see." On hearing her words, the guards of the dancing hall swiftly arrived in thousands, holding torches. Entering the house, they saw that Kichaka had been killed. They saw him lifeless, splattered with blood. "Where is the neck? Where are the feet? Where are the hands? Where is the head?" Having thus wondered, they decided that he had been killed by a gandharva.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'At that time, all the relatives assembled there and on seeing Kichaka killed, surrounded him from all sides and began to weep. All their body hair stood up and they were terrified when they saw Kichaka. All his limbs were mangled, like a turtle that has been dragged to the land. He had been crushed by Bhimasena, like a *danava* by Indra. They sought to take him outside, wishing to perform his funeral rites. Then the assembled sons of the suta saw Krishna. The unblemished one was stationed nearby, leaning against a pillar. Among the assembled sutas, an Upakichaka[43] said, "Let us swiftly kill this unchaste one, because of whom Kichaka has been slain. Or let us not kill her. Let us burn her with her beloved. Though he is dead, let us do what would have brought the son of suta pleasure." Then they told Virata, "Kichaka has been killed because of her. We will burn her with him. You should give us permission." O lord of the earth! Knowing the valour of the sutas, the king gave permission that Sairandhri should

be burnt with the son of the suta. They approached the terrified and lotus-eyed Krishna. She was stupefied and the Kichakas forcibly grabbed her. All of them raised and tied the slender-waisted one and carried her in the direction of the cremation ground. O king! The unblemished one was thus borne away by the sons of the suta. Krishna wailed for her protectors, because she did have protectors.

'Droupadi said, "Jaya! Jayanta! Vijaya! Jayatsena! Jayadbala![44] Hear my words. The sons of the suta are carrying me away. The twangs of their bows and the slapping of their arms is heard in great battles. The roars of their chariots are terrible. They are swift. They are the powerful and illustrious gandharvas. Hear my words. The sons of the suta are carrying me away."'

Vaishampayana said, 'As soon as he heard the wail of Krishna's piteous words, Bhima unhesitatingly leapt up from his bed. Bhimasena said, "O Sairandhri! I have heard the words that you have spoken. O timid one! You have no reason to fear the sons of the suta." Having spoken these words, the mighty-armed one stretched and extended his body and changed his attire, in a great rage. He emerged, but not through a door.[45] Bhimasena scaled the ramparts and swiftly uprooted a tree. He dashed towards the cremation ground, following the Kichakas. That tree was ten *vyamas* long[46] and he brandished it, with its trunk and its branches. The strong one rushed towards the sutas, like the god of death with a staff in his hand. The impact of his thighs made *nyagrodha*, *ashvattha* and *kimshuka* trees fall down on the ground and these were piled in a heap. On seeing the gandharva arrive,[47] like an extremely enraged lion, all the sutas were terrified and trembled in sorrow and dread. The Upakichakas were about to burn their elder brother and saw the gandharva advance like death. Trembling in sorrow and dread, they told each other, "A powerful and angry gandharva is advancing, brandishing a tree. Swiftly release Sairandhri. She is the reason for this great danger." On seeing the tree that had been uprooted by Bhimasena, they released Droupadi and fled towards the city.

'When Bhima saw them running away, like the wielder of the vajra seeing the danavas,[48] he dispatched one hundred and five of them to Yama's abode. O lord of the earth! He then released Krishna and comforted her. The mighty-armed one, the invincible Vrikodara, told Panchali Droupadi, whose face was despondent and whose eyes were full of tears, "O timid one! Those who molested you, though you are blameless, have been killed. O Krishna! Return to the city. You have nothing to fear. I will go to Virata's kitchen through a different route." O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Thus one hundred and five were slain there, like a giant forest that has been razed down, with its trees scattered. O king! One hundred and five Kichakas were killed. Including the general earlier, there were one hundred and six sutas. Men and women gathered to see that great and extraordinary deed. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They were extremely astounded and had nothing to say.'

Vaishampayana said, 'On seeing that the sutas had been killed, they went and told the king, "O king! The gandharvas have killed more than one hundred sons of the suta. Like the giant peak of a mountain shattered by a vajra, the sutas can be seen, scattered on the ground. Sairandhri has been set free and is returning to your residence. O king! The entire city now faces danger. Sairandhri is beautiful and the gandharvas are extremely powerful. There is no doubt that men are addicted to sexual intercourse. O king! Swiftly lay down some rules so that your city is not destroyed by one who is in the disguise of a sairandhri." On hearing their words, Virata, the lord of the armies, said, "Let the funeral rites be performed for the sutas. Kindle a fire well and let all of them be cremated together. Swiftly burn the Kichakas, with jewels and fragrances." Filled with fear, the king then spoke to his queen Sudeshna, "When Sairandhri arrives, tell her these words in my name. 'O Sairandhri! O fortunate one! Go wherever you desire! O one with the beautiful hips! The king is scared of being defeated by the gandharvas.' I cannot tell her this myself, because she is protected by the gandharvas. But women cannot cause offence. That is the reason I am asking you to tell her." Krishna had been freed from danger and the sons of the suta had been destroyed. She had been freed by Bhimasena and returned to the city, like a young and spirited doe that had been frightened by a tiger. She washed her limbs and her garments with water.

'O king! On seeing her, the men fled in the ten directions. Frightened of the gandharvas, some of them closed their eyes. O king! Panchali saw Bhimasena standing at the door of the kitchen, like a large and crazy elephant. She was surprised and softly spoke to him in a secret language,[49] "I honour the king of the gandharvas, who has freed me." Bhimasena replied, "The men who roam here are under her control now. Having heard her words, they are roaming without any debts."[50] She saw mighty-armed Dhananjaya in the dancing hall. He was instructing Virata's daughter in dancing. Emerging from the dancing hall with Arjuna, the maiden saw Krishna arrive, who had been molested though she had been innocent. The maiden said, "O Sairandhri! It is fortunate that you have been freed. It is fortunate that you have returned. Though you were innocent, you were molested and it is fortunate that the sutas who caused this have been slain." Brihannada said, "O Sairandhri! How were you freed? How were those evil ones slain? I wish to hear everything exactly as it happened." Sairandhri replied, "O Brihannada! What do you have to do with a sairandhri? O fortunate one! You live happily in the quarters meant for women. You will not confront the miseries a sairandhri does. You must be asking about my unhappiness in jest." Brihannada said, "O fortunate one! Brihannada also faces supreme unhappiness, having been reduced to an inferior life. O girl! You do not understand this." Together with the maiden, Droupadi entered the king's residence.

'She had no desire to run away and went before Sudeshna. The princess then

communicated Virata's words to her. "O Sairandhri! Swiftly go wherever you desire to go. O fortunate one! The king is scared of being defeated by the gandharvas. That apart, you are young and have beautiful eyebrows. Your beauty is unsurpassed on earth." Sairandhri replied, "O beautiful one! Let the king excuse me for thirteen days.[51] There is no doubt that the gandharvas will have accomplished their tasks by then. They will then take me away and do whatever brings you pleasure. It is certain that they will do that which is best for the king and his relatives."'

Section Forty-Seven

Go-Grahana Parva

This section has 1009 shlokas and thirty-nine chapters.

Chapter 620(24): 21 shlokas
Chapter 621(25): 17 shlokas
Chapter 622(26): 10 shlokas
Chapter 623(27): 28 shlokas
Chapter 624(28): 14 shlokas
Chapter 625(29): 28 shlokas
Chapter 626(30): 30 shlokas
Chapter 627(31): 24 shlokas
Chapter 628(32): 50 shlokas
Chapter 629(33): 21 shlokas
Chapter 630(34): 19 shlokas
Chapter 631(35): 26 shlokas
Chapter 632(36): 47 shlokas
Chapter 633(37): 15 shlokas
Chapter 634(38): 58 shlokas
Chapter 635(39): 23 shlokas
Chapter 636(40): 27 shlokas
Chapter 637(41): 23 shlokas
Chapter 638(42): 31 shlokas
Chapter 639(43): 21 shlokas
Chapter 640(44): 22 shlokas
Chapter 641(45): 26 shlokas
Chapter 642(46): 18 shlokas
Chapter 643(47): 19 shlokas
Chapter 644(48): 23 shlokas
Chapter 645(49): 23 shlokas
Chapter 646(50): 23 shlokas
Chapter 647(51): 17 shlokas
Chapter 648(52): 28 shlokas
Chapter 649(53): 69 shlokas
Chapter 650(54): 20 shlokas
Chapter 651(55): 25 shlokas
Chapter 652(56): 28 shlokas
Chapter 653(57): 19 shlokas
Chapter 654(58): 13 shlokas
Chapter 655(59): 44 shlokas
Chapter 656(60): 19 shlokas
Chapter 657(61): 29 shlokas
Chapter 658(62): 11 shlokas

Go *means cattle and* grahana *means to seize. So this section is about seizing cattle. With Kichaka's death, Virata is weakened and the Kouravas and Trigartas invade Matsya to rob Virata of his cattle. Virata is defeated by Susharma, the king of the Trigartas. However, the four Pandavas (Yudhishthira, Bhima, Nakula, Sahadeva) defeat Susharma and*

free Virata. Meanwhile, the Kurus rob Virata's kingdom of sixty thousand cattle. However, they are defeated by Arjuna, with Uttara as a charioteer. The Kurus return and the cattle are regained.

620(24)

Vaishampayana said, 'O lord of the earth! When Kichaka and his younger brothers were killed, people thought about how oppressive they had been and were amazed. There was speculation in the city and the countryside. "Kichaka was loved by the king because of his valour and great spirit. The evil-minded one oppressed men and molested their wives. It is certain that the gandharvas have killed the evil-souled and wicked one." O great king! In country after country, people talked about Kichaka, who had been the destroyer of enemy armies and had been invincible.

'Dhritarashtra's son had employed spies. They searched many villages, kingdoms and cities. Accomplishing the task that they had been assigned, they inspected countries and returned anxiously to Nagapura.[1] They saw King Kouravya, Dhritarashtra's son, together with Drona, Karna, Kripa and the great-souled Bhishma. They told Duryodhana, who was seated in the assembly hall with his brothers and the maharathas from Trigarta.[2] "O Indra among men! Always observing great care, we searched for the Pandavas in that great forest. It is deserted and is infested with wild animals. It is covered with many different kinds of trees, creepers and a large number of vines, shrouded with various thickets. The Parthas are extremely firm in their valour and we have not been able to find out where they have gone. We searched for their footsteps along every possible road, on mountain peaks, summits, many countries, in inhabited regions, mountainous villages and cities. O Indra among men! We have searched in many directions, but have not been able to find the Pandavas. O fortunate one! O bull among men! They have completely disappeared. O supreme among charioteers! O Indra among men! While we searched for those warriors, we followed their charioteers for some time. We enquired in the right fashion and have got to know everything. O scorcher of enemies! The charioteers reached Dvaravati without the Parthas. O king! The Pandavas are not there, nor Krishna, devoted to her husbands. They have completely vanished. Homage to thee! O bull among the Bharata lineage! We do not know the destinations or the residences of those great-souled ones. Nor do we know about the conduct or the deeds of the Pandavas. O Indra among men! O lord of the earth! Instruct us. While searching for the Pandavas, what will we do next? But listen to our pleasant words, which will ensure your fortune and welfare. O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The great-souled Kichaka, King Matsya's suta, who defeated the Trigartas with a large army, has been brought down and killed in the night by invisible gandharvas. O one without decay! The evil-souled one and his brothers are dead. O Kouravya! Hearing this pleasant news about the destruction of our enemy, you should be content and can decide on what should be done next."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing these words, King Duryodhana thought for a long time and then spoke to those who were in the assembly hall. "It is indeed very difficult to examine all courses of action up to the ultimate end. Therefore, all of you must try to determine where the Pandavas have gone. They were to spend the thirteenth year in concealment. Most of it has passed and only a little bit remains. If the Pandavas, who follow the vow of truth, can spend the remaining part of the year, they will have fulfilled their pledge. Because of their miseries, it is certain that they will all be angry with the Kouravas, like kings of serpents and virulent snakes. But if they are detected before the time has passed, all of them will again return to the forest, forced to control their wrath and wearing miserable disguises. Therefore, take measures to swiftly detect them. Our kingdom will then be without dissension, without decay and without rivals for a long time." Karna then said, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Let other men go, those who are shrewder, more skilled and loyal. Let those spies swiftly travel in disguise and roam in countries that are prosperous and populated, in assemblages of virtuous ones and mendicants, along roads and places of pilgrimage and places where mining takes place. Let them carefully ask men, with humility. The Pandavas are living in disguise. They must be sought by skilled spies, who are themselves disguised. Employ many, one after another, to search in rivers and bowers, places of pilgrimage, villages, cities, beautiful hermitages and mountainous caverns." The younger brother Duhshasana was addicted to evil traits. He then told his older brother, "All of us should pay attention to what Karna has said. As instructed, let all the spies search in all those places. Let many others be employed and let them search in every country, in the proper way. Nothing has been known about their destinations, residences and occupations. They are dwelling in great secrecy. Or perhaps they have gone to the other shore of the ocean. They are vain about their bravery and they may have been eaten up in the great forest by predators. Or they may have confronted a calamity and been destroyed for eternity. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Therefore, forget all anxieties. O lord of men! If you so wish, do what must be done with appropriate enthusiasm."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Drona was immensely valorous and knew everything about artha. He then spoke. "Those who are like them never face destruction or defeat. They are brave and possess learning. They possess intelligence and are in control of their senses. They are knowledgeable about dharma and are grateful. They are devoted to Dharmaraja. They know the nature of policy, dharma and artha. He[3] is like an attentive father towards them. The eldest brother is always established in dharma and follows the truth. He obeys his elders. O king! The great-souled brothers follow their brother. Ajatashatru[4] is humble and follows his brothers. Why should Partha[5] not follow a

conduct that ensures the welfare of those obedient and great-souled ones? That is the reason they have been waiting for this time to arrive. I have perceived in my mind that such persons cannot have been destroyed. Therefore, waste no time and decide on the course of action that must be followed. Think about the right course of action and think about where they might be residing. The sons of Pandu are always self-controlled. They will be difficult to detect. It is certain that they are brave. They do not commit sin and are devoted to austerities. Partha is pure in soul and possesses all the qualities. He is truthful, virtuous and upright. He is like a mass of energy and can blind anyone's eyes. Knowing thus, let us search for them again. Let us use brahmanas, spies, *siddhas*[6] and all others who know them."'

623(27)

Vaishampayana said, 'Bhishma, Shantanu's son, was the grandfather of the Bharatas. He was learned in the sacred texts and knew about places and time and the nature of everything. He knew all about dharma. After the preceptor had spoken, he praised those words. To ensure the welfare of the Bharatas, he addressed these words to them. In accordance with his devotion towards dharma, he spoke about his affection for Yudhishthira, who knew about dharma. Such words are always liked by the virtuous and the strict, but are difficult for dishonest ones to accept.

'Bhishma thus spoke words that are honoured by the righteous. "It is exactly as brahmana Drona, who knows everything about artha, has said. The Pandavas possess all the auspicious marks and cannot be destroyed. They are learned and have good conduct. They observe righteous vows. They follow the instructions of the aged. They are devoted to truthful vows. They know about auspicious times and follow rites at those times. They are pure in their vows. They cannot be destroyed when they uphold the ways of the virtuous. The Pandavas are protected through dharma and through their own valour. It is my view that they cannot have been destroyed. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I will tell you my thoughts on what should be done about the Pandavas. This is the right policy and it can only be appreciated by those who follow good policy, not by others. When we think about the Pandavas, we should do what it is possible for us to do. Listen to me when I tell you. We should use intelligence, not animosity. O son![7] I never give such counsel to those who are dishonest. One who follows the instructions of elders is always established in truthfulness. Good advice must always be given, and never that which is evil. If one wishes for dharma, one must always speak according to one's intelligence. I do not think the way these other people do. Wherever King Yudhishthira is, whether it is in the city or the countryside, the people will not be envious, malicious, insolent or jealous. The people there will all be devoted to their own dharma. There will be many incantations to the *brahman*.[8] Oblations will be completed. There will be many sacrifices, with a lot of gifts. There is

no doubt that the rain god will always shower there at the right time. The earth will be full of grain and free from disease. The grain will be succulent and the fruit will have all the qualities. The garlands will be fragrant and the words will be soft and auspicious. The wind will be pleasant to the touch and all meetings will be friendly. Where King Yudhishthira lives, there will not be any fear. The cows will be plentiful, not weak and difficult to milk. Milk, curds and butter will be tasty and good for the health. Whatever be the country where King Yudhishthira is, food and drink will be succulent, with all the qualities. Taste, touch, smell and sound will possess all the qualities. Wherever King Yudhishthira is, all sights will be delightful. Everything will possess its own qualities in this thirteenth year. O son! In the country where the Pandavas obtain protection, people will be content, cheerful, pure, health, honourable towards gods and guests, devoted towards all beings, generous, with great energy and devoted to the eternal dharma. They will discard the impure and serve the pure. They will sacrifice and observe good vows. Such will people be, wherever King Yudhishthira is. O son! They will give up false speech. Everything will be pure, beneficial and auspicious. Wherever King Yudhishthira lives, everyone will strive for the auspicious and possess auspicious intelligence. The men there will always seek to ensure welfare. O son! The one with dharma in his soul is invisible and cannot be detected by brahmanas. How can ordinary men then be capable of finding out the Partha? Truth, perseverance, generosity, complete peace, extreme forgiveness, humility, prosperity, fame, great energy, non-violence and honesty exist in him. The intelligent one has taken care about his disguised place of residence. I have described his destination with due care. What else can I say? Now think about this and decide what seems beneficial to you. O Kouravya! If you have any faith in me, do this quickly."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Then Sharadvan's son, Kripa, spoke the following words. "Everything that the aged one[9] has said about the Pandavas is full of dharma and artha, is appropriate, and has been argued with reason. Listen to what I have to say, and it is similar to Bhishma's words. Let us reflect about how we can determine their destinations with the use of those who live in places of pilgrimage. Let us follow a policy that ensures our welfare. O son![10] One should not ignore even ordinary enemies. O son! In the field of battle, the Pandavas are skilled in the use of all weapons. The great-souled Pandavas are in disguise and are dwelling in secret until the time is up. When the time arrives for them to return, you should determine your own strength in your own kingdom and that of other kingdoms. There is no doubt that the time for the Pandavas to rise is near. When the time has elapsed, the great-souled and immensely strong Parthas will be full of great endeavour. The Pandavas are infinitely energetic. Therefore, decide on forces, a treasury and a policy so that, when the time arrives, we

can deal with them in an appropriate way. O son! I think that you should get to know everything about your own strength and those of all your friends, whether they are strong or weak. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! We should know our strength, whether it is superior, inferior or equal. Whether we are happy or unhappy, we will then be able to enter into an agreement with our rivals. With those who are stronger, we will use *sama*, *bheda*, *dana* and *danda*.[11] With those who are weak in strength, we will use force in the appropriate way. Having pacified our friends, we will easily raise an army. When you have extended your treasury and your forces well, you will obtain complete success. You will then be able to counter powerful enemies who arrive, and even the Pandavas, who are weaker in forces and vehicles. O Indra among men! Having thus determined a decision in accordance with your own dharma and the appropriate time, you will attain happiness for a long time."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'King Susharma of Trigata, the leader of a large number of chariots, had been repeatedly defeated earlier by Kichaka, the suta of the Matsyas, accompanied by the Salveyakas. When the time was right, that lord swiftly spoke these words of grave import. O lord! His forces, together with those of his relatives, had earlier been defeated by that powerful one. He now looked at Karna and spoke to Duryodhana. "In earlier times, using his greater powers, the king of Matsya oppressed my kingdom. The powerful Kichaka was his general. The evil-souled one was terrible and invincible and was famous on earth because of his valour. That wicked and cruel one has now been killed by the gandharvas. O king! On his being killed, it is my view that Virata has lost his insolence and is without endeavour and without refuge. O unblemished one! If it pleases you, let me, all the Kouravas and the great-souled Karna go there. I think that this occurrence requires immediate action that will fetch us benefits. Let all of us go to that kingdom, which is full of foodgrains. We will take away all its jewels and many riches. We will rob the villages and provinces and divide them up. We will invade his city by force and take away the many thousands of excellent cattle. O lord of the earth! The Kouravas, together with the Trigartas, arrayed well, will take away all the cattle. We will rob him of his virility and force an alliance on him. We will kill all his soldiers and bring him under our suzerainty. Having brought him under our subjugation, we will dwell there happily. There is no doubt that this will increase your strength."

'On hearing these words, Karna told the king, "Susharma has spoken words that are appropriate to the occasion and they are for our welfare. Let our forces yoke their mounts and swiftly march out. O unblemished one! Let us arrange our forces, or whatever else that you desire. Consult with the wise elders among the Kurus, our grandfather, the preceptor Drona and Sharadvan's son, Kripa. Do what all of them think

and let us advance. We should advance quickly and overpower that lord of the earth. What do we have to do with the Pandavas? They are weak in riches, forces and manliness. They have either been destroyed, or have reached Yama's abode. O king! Let us attack Virata's kingdom without any anxiety. Let us grab his cattle and his many other riches." King Duryodhana swiftly accepted Vaikartana[12] Karna's words. He himself instructed Duhshasana, who was always devoted to his commands. "Consult with the elders and swiftly yoke the army. As instructed, we will go there, with all the Kouravas. As instructed, let maharatha King Susharma also go there, with all his forces and vehicles. Let him go to Matysa first, but concealing his intentions. We will follow him, but a day later. Preparing ourselves well, we will advance towards Matsya's territory. Suddenly arriving in Virata's city, we will swiftly subdue the cowherds and take away their great riches. There are hundreds of thousands of handsome cattle, with all the qualities. We will divide our forces into two and rob him of these." O lord of the earth! As commanded, Susharma marched in a south-eastern direction. He began to rob the cattle on the seventh lunar day of *dharmapaksha*.[13] O king! On the following day, the eighth day, all the Kouravas joined forces and robbed thousands of cowsheds.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'O great king! The infinitely energetic and great-souled Pandavas had adopted disguises and dwelt in Virata's excellent city. While they lived there, the promised period elapsed. They performed tasks for Virata, lord of the earth. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! After the end of the thirteenth year, Susharma swiftly robbed a large number of cattle. A herdsman then arrived at the city with great speed and descended from his chariot. He saw the king of Matsya seated, wearing earrings and bracelets. He was surrounded by brave warriors, all adorned with earrings and armlets. He was surrounded by his advisers, together with the Pandavas, bulls among men. The great king, the extender of the kingdom, was seated in his assembly hall. He approached Virata, bowed in worship, and said, "The Trigartas have vanquished us, together with our relatives, in battle. They are taking away hundreds and thousands of cattle. O Indra among men! Rescue your animals quickly, or they will be lost." When he heard this, the king of Matsya assembled his army.

'There were a large number of chariots, elephants and horses. There were flags and infantry. The kings and the princes donned their armour, bright and colourful and prepared well. Virata's beloved brother, Shatanika, donned armour made out of molten gold and made firm with an underlay of iron. Madirashva, younger to Shatanika, wore invincible and firm armour that was constructed well. The king of Matsya wore impenetrable armour, adorned with a hundred suns, a hundred circles, a hundred dots and a hundred eyes. There were one hundred lotuses and *sougandhikas*[14] embossed on Suryadatta's armour, plated with gold and as bright as the sun. Virata's eldest son, the

brave maharatha Shankha, wore shining armour made out of iron, with one hundred eyes embossed on it. There were hundreds of maharathas armoured in this way. Armed and ready to fight, they looked like gods. Their chariots were bright and large and had been prepared well. Each of the maharathas yoked horses with golden harnesses to their respective chariots. Matysa's glorious standard was raised on his golden and divine chariot, resplendent like the sun and the moon. There were many other pennants of different types, adorned in gold. The brave kshatriyas affixed them to their respective chariots.

'Then the king of Matsya spoke to his younger brother Shatanika. "In my view, there is no doubt that Kanka, Ballava, the one in charge of the cows,[15] and the brave Damagranthi will fight. Give them chariots with flags and pennants. They should have colourful armour, both firm and malleable. Let them wear these on their bodies and give them weapons. Those men have the bodies of brave ones, like the trunks of kings of elephants. It is my view that they have never refused to fight." Having heard the king's words, Shatanika, whose understanding was swift, followed the king's instructions and gave chariots to the Parthas—Sahadeva, the king,[16] Bhima and Nakula. Those charioteers placed devotion to the king in the forefront and happily yoked the chariots that had been given by the lord of men. Their deeds were unsullied and they donned the colourful armour, both firm and malleable, that had been given by Virata. Those scorchers of enemies donned them on their bodies and were armed. All of them were skilled in fighting and swift, but were still in disguise. Those bulls among the Kurus followed Virata—the four brave Pandava brothers, with truth as their valour. There were terrible mad elephants, musth strewing down their temples. They were sixty years old, with well-formed tusks, and were like monsoon clouds. They had skilled riders as mounts, trained in elephants, and these followed the king, like moving mountains. The foremost and skilled among the followers of Matsya were obedient and happy. They had eight thousand chariots, one thousand elephants and sixty thousand horses, and advanced. O bull among the Bharata lineage! O great king! As it emerged, Virata's beautiful army was resplendent and followed the footprints of the cattle. Virata's army were splendid. There were firmly armed infantry and a large number of elephants, horses and chariots.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Emerging from the city, the brave and armed ones arranged themselves in battle formsations. The Matsyas encountered the Trigartas when the sun had gone down. The Trigartas and the Matsyas were powerful and irrepressible in battle. The immensely strong ones roared at each other in anger, eager to grasp the cattle. Brave ones, skilled in handling elephants, were ascended on elephants and goaded them with spikes and hooks. There ensued a terrible and tumultuous fight, which

made the body hair stand up. O king! As the sun went down, it was like that between the gods and the asuras. Dust arose from the ground and nothing could be seen. Covered with dust raised by the soldiers, birds fell down on the ground. The sun disappeared behind the thick shower of arrows that were released. The firmament was ablaze, as if with fireflies. The bows of the archers were plated with gold. Those brave ones in the world shot with the right hand and the left and were smitten down. Chariots fought with chariots and infantry with infantry. Cavalry fought with cavalry and elephants with mighty elephants. O king! As they engaged in battle, they struck each other with swords, sharp spears, lances, spikes and javelins. The brave ones possessed arms that were like clubs. They struck each other in that battle, but the brave ones were unable to vanquish the enemy heroes. Severed heads could be seen, covered with dust, with mangled lips, but with the noses intact, ornamented and adorned with earrings and with the hair dressed. In that great battle, the bodies of kshatriyas could be seen there, shattered into many parts by the arrows, resembling the trunks of shala trees. The earth was covered with heads wearing earrings and smeared with sandalwood, like the bodies of serpents. The earth was covered with dust and the flow of blood made this subside. But the terrible and dreadful combat went on, without any restraint.

'Shatanika killed one hundred. Vishalaksha killed four hundred.[17] Those maharathas penetrated the large army of the Trigartas. They engaged in hand to hand, hair to hair and nail to nail combat. On noticing the collection of chariots of the Trigartas, they penetrated with Suryadatta at the front and Madirashva at the back.[18] Virata destroyed five hundred chariots in that battle. He killed hundreds of horses and five maharathas. Following different routes, that leader of charioteers penetrated that mass of chariots, until he encountered Susharma of Trigarta, mounted on a golden chariot, in that field of battle. Those two great-souled and immensely strong ones struck each other, roaring at each other like bulls in a pen of cows. Those charioteers circled each other on chariots. They swiftly discharged arrows, like clouds unleashing torrents of rain. Intolerant and angry, skilled in use of weapons, they attacked each other with sharp arrows, swords, lances and clubs. Then the king pierced Susharma with ten arrows and each of his four horses with five arrows each. But Susharma was irrepressible in battle and supreme in use of weapons. He struck the king of the Matsyas with fifty sharp arrows. In the evening, with everything covered in dust, the soldiers of the king of Matsya and Susharma could not see each other.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The world was then covered in darkness and dust. The warriors paused for an instant, without breaking the battle formations. Then the moon arose, dispelling the darkness. It made the night clear and gladdened the kshatriyas engaged in battle. When everything could be seen, the battle

resumed. It assumed a terrible form and they could not see each other. Susharma of Trigarta, and his younger brother, rushed at the king of Matsya and surrounded him from all sides with chariots. Descending from their chariots, those bulls among the kshatriyas, grasped clubs in their hands and dashed towards the horses.[19] The powerful ones were angry and attacked each other with clubs, swords, battleaxes and sharp arrows that had fine and yellow tips.[20] Having vanquished all the forces of the king of Matysa with his army, Susharma, the lord of Trigarta, skilfully defeated Matsya and rushed at the great-spirited Virata. He separately killed the horses and the charioteers who were on both sides. With the king of Matsya having lost his chariot, he[21] captured him alive. Susharma molested him, like one driven by lust acting towards a weeping bride. He made him ascend his own chariot and departed with his swift steeds.

'Virata was supremely strong. But he was bereft of his chariot and was captured. The Matsyas, oppressed by the Trigartas, were frightened and fled. On seeing that they were terrified, Yudhishthira, Kunti's son, spoke to the mighty-armed Bhimasena, the destroyer of enemies. "Susharma of Trigarta has captured the king of the Matsyas. O mighty-armed one! Free him, so that he does not fall into the clutches of the enemy. All of us have lived happily in his house. All our wishes have been met and we have been honoured well. O Bhimasena! You must act thus and free us of the debt we owe him for our dwelling there." Bhimasena replied, "O king! On your instructions, I will free him. Behold my extremely great deed when I fight with the enemies. Resorting to the strength of your arms, stand here, on one side, together with our brothers. Witness my valour now. This gigantic tree stands here, with a well-formed trunk that is like a club. I will uproot it and drive away the enemies." On seeing that his brave brother was glancing at the tree, like an angry elephant, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira spoke to him. "O Bhima! Do not act rashly. Let the tree stand there. You should not perform such superhuman deeds with a tree. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! People will then recognize you to be Bhima. Get hold of some other weapon that is used by men—a bow, or a spear, a sword or a battleaxe. O Bhima! Grasp a weapon used by humans and free the lord of the earth, so that you are not noticed by others. The immensely strong twins will guard your wheels. O son![22] Thus, arrayed in battle formation, free the king of Matsya." Then all of them goaded their horses. Using divine weapons, they impatiently attacked the Trigartas. On seeing that the Pandavas were returning on their chariots, Virata's large army took heart again. They were extremely enraged and performed wonderful deeds in battle.

'Yudhishthira, Kunti's son, killed one thousand. Bhima made seven hundred others see the world hereafter. Nakula killed seven hundred with his arrows and the powerful Sahadeva killed three hundred heroes. O bull among men! Following Yudhishthira's orders, those bulls among men, destroyed that large army of Trigarta. Maharatha King Yudhishthira swiftly rushed at Susharma and showered him with arrows. Susharma was

extremely enraged and impatiently pierced Yudhishthira with nine arrows and his horses with four. O king! Then Vrikodara, Kunti's son, approached Susharma and destroyed his horses. Having killed the warriors stationed at the rear with supreme arrows, he angrily brought down the charioteer from the chariot. The brave one who protected his[23] wheels was famous by the name of Shonashva. He was frightened on seeing that Trigarta had been robbed of his chariot. Then Virata descended from Susharma's chariot. Grasping his[24] club, he powerfully attacked him. Though he was old, with a club in his hand, he attacked him like one who was young. Bhima, terrible in form and wearing earrings, jumped down from his chariot and grasped the king of Trigarta, like a lion grasping small deer. Bereft of his chariot, maharatha Trigarta was thus grasped. All of Trigarta's soldiers were afflicted by fear and dispersed.

'After Susharma had been defeated, the immensely strong sons of Pandu retrieved all the cattle and got back all the riches. They had the strength of their own arms. They were humble. They were rigid in their vows. They happily spent the night amidst the forefront of that army. The maharatha Kounteyas had displayed superhuman courage and Virata showed them homage and honoured them with riches. Virata said, "All these jewels are yours, just as they are mine. All of you perform the tasks you wish to. Do what you wish, in accordance with what brings you happiness. O destroyers of enemies! I will give you bejewelled maidens and many riches and whatever else comes to your mind. It is because of your prowess that I have been freed today and am safe. Therefore, you are now lord of the Matsyas and of everything else." All the Kouravas,[25] with Yudhishthira at the forefront, separately showed their homage to Matsya and, hands joined in salutation, said, "O lord of the earth! We are delighted with everything that you have said. It is a matter of satisfaction to us that you have now been freed from your enemies." The king of Matsya, mighty-armed Virata and supreme among kings, was extremely pleased and again told Yudhishthira, "Come. I will instate you as the king of Matsya. O destroyer of enemies! I will give you everything that your mind desires—gems, cattle, gold, jewels and pearls. You deserve everything. O Vaiyaghrapadya! O Indra among brahmanas![26] I show you homage in every way. It is because of you that I am now alive and am able to see my kingdom and children. The enemy, who caused me violence, is now within my powers." Then Yudhishthira again spoke to Matsya, "O Matsya! We welcome the pleasant words that you have uttered. Always resort to non-violence and be extremely happy always. O king! Let messengers go to your city to announce the pleasant news of your victory to your well-wishers." At these words, the king of Matsya instructed his emissaries, "Go to the city and announce my victory in battle. Let the princes be ornamented and let them come out of the city. Let there be musical instruments. Let all the courtesans adorn themselves." They went to the city that very night. At the time of sunrise, the messengers announced Virata's triumph.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'After Matsya followed Trigarta to recover his animal, Duryodhana and his advisers invaded Virata's kingdom. Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Kripa who was supremely skilled in weapons, Drona's son,[27] Soubala, the lord Duhshasana, Vivimshati, Vikarna, the valorous Chitrasena, Durmukha, Duhsaha and other maharathas invaded King Virata's kingdom of Matsya. They swiftly captured the cattle stations and plundered the riches of cattle. Encircling them on every side with a large collection of chariots, the Kurus seized sixty thousand cows. The cowherds were killed by those maharathas in that terrible encounter and a great lamentation arose. The chief of the cowherds was terrified. In great affliction, he quickly mounted a chariot and left for the city. Entering the city, he went to the king's residence. Descending swiftly from the chariot, he entered and recounted what had happened.

'He saw Matsya's insolent son, named Bhuminjaya, there. He told him everything about how the animals of the kingdom had been plundered. "The Kurus are taking away sixty thousand cows. Cattle bring prosperity to the kingdom. Arise and bring them back. O prince! If you have our welfare in mind, swiftly march out yourself. King Matysa left you in charge of the empty kingdom. In the midst of the courtiers, that lord of men takes pride in you. 'My son is like me. He is brave and is an extender of the lineage. He is a warrior who is skilled in the use of arrows and weapons. My son is always courageous.' Make those words of that Indra among men come true. O supreme among those who possesses animals! Restrain the Kurus and recover the animals. Burn them down with your terrible shafts and energetic arrows. Unleash arrows with golden shafts, with smooth tufts, from your bow. Destroy the enemies, like the leader of a herd of elephants. Your bow is like a veena, the string is the chord. The handle is the base. The loops are the two blocks at the end. The arrows are the notes and strike them in the midst of the enemies. Your steeds are as white as silver. Let them be yoked to the chariot. O lord! Your pennant has the emblem of a golden lion. Let it be raised. Your arrows have golden shafts. They are smooth at the tip. Let them be released from your skilful hands and they will overshadow these kings like the sun and reduce their lives. Defeat all the Kurus in battle, like the wielder of the vajra[28] against the asuras. Having attained great fame, return again to the city. You are the son of the lord of Matsya. You are the supreme refuge of the kingdom. Let all of us who reside in the kingdom find refuge in you today." Having been thus addressed by these terrible words in the midst of the women, he[29] proudly spoke these words in the inner quarters.'

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'Uttara said, "I wield a firm bow and I will today follow the footprints of the cattle, but only if someone skilled in horses becomes my charioteer. But I do not know of any man who can drive me. Swiftly look for a charioteer who can drive me out. My charioteer

was killed in the great battle that lasted for twenty-eight nights, if not for an entire month. As soon as I find another man who is skilled in knowledge of horses, I will quickly ride out, with my giant standard raised. I will enter the ranks of the enemy army, with its many elephants, horses and chariots. The Kurus will be defeated through the valour of my weapons and power and I will bring back the animals. In battle, I will terrify Duryodhana, Shantanu's son,[30] Vaikartana Karna, Kripa, Drona and his son[31] and all the other great archers who have assembled, like the wielder of the vajra against the danavas. I will bring back the animals in an instant. Finding that the kingdom is deserted, the Kurus are taking away the riches of cattle. What can I possibly do if I am not there? Today, the assembled Kurus will witness my valour. 'Is it Partha Arjuna himself who is vanquishing us?'"'[32]

Vaishampayana said, 'He repeatedly spoke these words in the presence of the women and Panchali could not tolerate his reference to Bibhatsu.[33] In the midst of the women, the ascetic one approached him. With a bashful expression, she softly spoke these words. "This extremely handsome youth is known by the name of Brihannada and resembles a gigantic elephant. He has been Partha's charioteer. He was the great-souled one's disciple and was not inferior to him in the use of the bow. O brave one! I have seen him earlier, when I dwelt with the Pandavas. When the conflagration of the fire burnt down the great Khandava,[34] it is he who drove Arjuna's supreme steeds. With him as charioteer, Partha conquered all the beings in Khandavaprastha. There is no other charioteer like him. O brave one! Your maiden sister has beautiful hips and there is no doubt that he will follow her orders. If he becomes your charioteer, there is no doubt that you will vanquish all the Kurus and return swiftly with the cattle." On being thus addressed by Sairandhri, he spoke to his sister. "O one with the unblemished limbs! Go and bring Brihannada here." Thus sent by her brother, she quickly went to the dancing hall where the mighty-armed Pandava lived, hidden in his disguise.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'O king! On seeing his friend, the large-eyed princess, he[35] smiled and asked her why she had come. Approaching that bull among men, in the midst of her friends, the princess affectionately spoke these words. "O Brihannada! The kingdom's cattle are being robbed by the Kurus. My archer brother is leaving to defeat them. But not long ago, the charioteer of his chariot was slain in battle. There is no other charioteer who is equal to him as a charioteer. O Brihannada! While he was looking for a charioteer, Sairandhri spoke to him about your skill in handling horses. O Brihannada! Be good enough to act as a charioteer for my brother, before the Kurus drive our cattle too far away. If you do not act in accordance with the request I am affectionately making to you, I will give up my life today." At these words of his friend, the one with the beautiful hips, the scorcher of enemies went to the prince, like a maddened

elephant. The large-eyed one followed him, like an elephant calf following a she-elephant.

'On seeing him from a distance, the prince spoke to him. "With you as a charioteer, Partha satisfied the fire god in Khandava. Dhananjaya, Kunti's son, conquered the entire earth. Sairandhri knows the Pandavas and spoke to me about you. O Brihannada! Drive my horses too, when I fight with the Kurus and recover our riches of cattle. In earlier times, you were Arjuna's favourite charioteer. It is with your aid that the bull among Pandavas conquered the earth." Having been thus addressed by the prince, Brihannada replied, "What capacity do I possess to be a charioteer in a field of battle? Singing, dancing, or the playing of a musical instrument would have been different. I can do that. O fortunate one! How can I drive a chariot?" Uttara said, "O Brihannada! You will become a singer or a dancer again. Swiftly ascend the chariot and control these supreme horses." Pandava, the scorcher of enemies, knew everything. But before Uttara, he committed mistakes in jest. He donned the armour upside down on his body. The large-eyed maidens laughed when they saw this. On seeing him thus confused, Uttara himself fastened the expensive armour on Brihannada. He himself donned superb armour that was as dazzling as the sun. Having raised a pennant with a lion, he instructed him to be the charioteer. The brave one had Brihannada as his charioteer and rode out, with expensive bows and many beautiful arrows.

'Uttara[36] and the other maidens who were her friends told him, "O Brihannada! When you have defeated the Kurus, led by Bhishma and Drona, in battle, you must bring back many beautiful dresses for our dolls, colourful and fine." Partha, descendant of the Pandu lineage, smilingly replied in words that were like the rumbling of the clouds, "If Uttara vanquishes those maharathas in battle, I will bring back divine and beautiful garments for you." Having spoken these words, brave Bibhatsu drove the chariot towards the Kurus, who had many kinds of flags and pennants.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Having emerged from the capital, Virata's son, Prithivinjaya,[37] told his charioteer, "Go where the Kurus are. Having defeated all the Kurus who have assembled in search of victory and having quickly recovered the cattle, I will return to my city again." Then the descendant of the Pandu lineage goaded those excellent steeds. Urged by that lion among men, those horses, which were as fleet as the wind and were bedecked in golden garlands, carried them, as if they seemed to touch the sky. Having travelled a short distance, Matsya's son and Dhananjaya, the destroyers of enemies, beheld the powerful Kuru army. They approached the Kurus near a cremation ground. They saw the gigantic army, which made a sound like that of the ocean and was like a forest with many trees crawling through the sky. O supreme among men! The kings saw the dust swirling around, making it difficult for beings to see and extending up to the

sky. The giant army was full of elephants, horses and chariots. It was protected by Karna, Duryodhana, Kripa and Shantanu's son,[38] and by the intelligent and great archer Drona, together with his son.[39]

'On seeing this, Virata's son was frightened and his body hair stood up. He told Partha, "I cannot fight with the Kurus. On seeing them, my body hair is standing up. There are many terrible warriors, impossible for even the gods to vanquish. I cannot repulse the Kuru soldiers, who seem to stretch to eternity. I cannot enter the army of the Bharatas, with its terrible bows, large numbers of chariots, elephants and horses, and full of infantry and flags. On seeing the enemy in the battlefield, my soul has begun to tremble. Drona, Bhishma, Kripa, Karna, Vivimshati, Ashvatthama, Vikarna, Somadatta, Bahlika and brave King Duryodhana, supreme among charioteers, are there. There are many other radiant and great archers, all skilled in fighting. On seeing the Kurus, armed and arranged in battle formation, my body hair has begun to stand up and I have been overcome with lassitude." On saying this, the stupid one wished to return and lamented foolishly before Savyasachi, who did not withdraw. "My father has gone to fight with the Trigartas and has left me alone in charge. He has taken all the soldiers and I have no soldiers. I am alone against many and I am only a child. They are skilled in weapons and possess experience. I cannot fight with them. O Brihannada! Return." Arjuna replied, "You are miserable from fear. Why are you increasing the delight of your enemies? The enemies haven't yet done anything against you in the battlefield. You yourself told me to take you towards the Kouravas. I will take you to the place where there are many flags flying. O mighty-armed one! I will take you to the midst of the Kurus, who are assassins[40] and like vultures looking for flesh, even if they fight from inside the earth. You boasted of your manliness before women and men, before we set out. Why do you not wish to fight? O brave one! If you return home without having recovered the cattle, all the men and women will laugh at you. Sairandhri praised me because of my deeds as a charioteer. I will not be able to return to the city without having recovered the cattle. Sairandhri praised me and you ordered me. Why should I not fight with all the Kurus? Be steadfast." Uttara said, "Let the Kurus rob many riches from the Matsyas, as they wish. O Brihannada! Let men and women laugh at me." Having spoken these words, the evil-souled one jumped down from the chariot. Sporting earrings, he abandoned his pride and threw away his bow and arrows.

'Brihannada said, "Running away has never been said to be the dharma of brave kshatriyas. Dying in battle is superior to running away in fear." Speaking these words, Kounteya Dhananjaya descended from that supreme chariot. He pursued the prince who was running away. His long braid trailed and his red garment fluttered. On seeing him run with his trailing braid and not knowing that it was Arjuna, some soldiers laughed on seeing his strange form. But on seeing him run swiftly, the Kurus said, "Who is disguised in this form, like a fire beneath ashes? He seems to be partly a man and partly a

woman. Though he is in the form of a eunuch, he seems to resemble Arjuna. He has the same head and neck, and arms like clubs. His gait is also the same. This can be no one other than Dhananjaya. Dhanajaya is to men what the lord of the gods[41] is to the immortals. Who in this world, other than Dhananjaya, will come alone to fight with us? Virata left a single son in that deserted city. He has ventured forth because of his childish folly, not because of his manliness. That must be Partha Arjuna who is running there in disguise. Uttara made him his charioteer when he emerged from the city. It seems to us, having seen our flags, he is frightened and is running away. It must certainly be Dhananjaya who is running after him to restrain him." Individually, all the Kurus thought in this way. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! But having seen the Pandava in disguise, they were unable to arrive at any definite conclusion. Meanwhile, Dhananjaya ran after Uttara. Within one hundred steps, he seized him by the hair.

'Seized by Arjuna, Virata's son began to lament in many piteous words, as if he had been sorely oppressed. "I will give you a hundred nishkas made out of pure gold.[42] I will give you eight sparkling *vaidurya*[43] gems set in gold. I will give you a chariot with a golden standard, drawn by well-trained horses and ten mad elephants. O Brihannada! Let me go." While the insensate one was lamenting in these words, the tiger among men laughed and brought him to the chariot. Partha spoke to the frightened one, who had lost his senses. "O destroyer of enemies! If you are incapable of fighting with the foes, control the horses while I fight with the enemy. Protected by the strength of my arms, let us penetrate this unassailable and terrible mass of chariots, protected by heroes who are maharathas. O foremost among princes! O scorcher of enemies! Do not be afraid. You are a kshatriya. I will fight with the Kurus and recover your animals. Enter that impenetrable and unassailable mass of chariots. O best among men! Be my charioteer while I fight with the Kurus." O bull among the Bharata lineage! Having thus spoken to Virata's son, the unvanquished Bibhatsu reassured Uttara for an instant. Then Partha, supreme among warriors, made the unwilling and insensate one, oppressed by fear, ascend the chariot.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'On seeing that bull among men ascend the chariot in the form of a eunuch and head for the shami tree, after having made Uttara ascend the chariot, the supreme charioteers among the Kurus, with Bhishma and Drona at the front, were all agitated in their minds out of fear of Dhananjaya. On seeing them lose their endeavour and on witnessing extraordinary omens, the preceptor Bharadvaja,[44] supreme among wielders of weapons, said, "Violent and turbulent winds are blowing, rough and harsh in tone. The sky is covered in a darkness that has the complexion of ashes. The clouds are extraordinary to look at, with a rough hue. Many weapons are coming out of their sheaths. Jackals are lamenting and the directions are ablaze with a terrible light. The

horses are shedding tears. The flags are fluttering, though there is nothing to move them. Since many such portents can be seen, be steadfast, because a great battle must be near. Protect yourselves and arrange yourselves in battle formations. Wait for a slaughter and protect the wealth of cattle. This is a brave and mighty archer, supreme among those who are skilled in all weapons. There is no doubt that it is Partha who has arrived in the form of a eunuch. This is the valorous Partha, Savyasachi, the scorcher of enemies. He will not refrain from battle, even against masses of Maruts.[45] The brave one suffered difficulties in the forest and was trained by Vasava.[46] He is intolerant and there is no doubt that he will do battle. O Kouravas! I do not see a warrior who is capable of repulsing him. It is said that Partha satisfied Mahadeva[47] himself in a battle." Karna replied, "You always belittle us by speaking about Phalguna's qualities. But Arjuna isn't worth one *kala*[48] of me or Duryodhana." Duryodhana said, "O Radheya![49] If it is Partha, my task will be accomplished. Once recognized, they will have to roam again for another twelve years. Or if it is some other man in the form of a eunuch, I will soon bring him down to ground with extremely sharp arrows." When Dhritarashtra's son, scorcher of enemies, spoke these words, Bhishma, Drona, Kripa and Drona's son honoured his manliness.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'On reaching the shami tree, Partha told Virata's son, whom he knew to be extremely delicate and not experienced in battle, "O Uttara! Instructed by me, swiftly fetch my bows. Yours will not be able to withstand my strength, or bear great pressure, or strike down an elephant, or sustain the force of my arms when I defeat the enemies. O Bhuminjaya! Therefore, quickly climb this shami tree that is covered with foliage. The bows of the sons of Pandu are hidden there—Yudhishthira, Bhima, Bibhatsu and the twins, as well as the flags, the arrows and the divine armour of those brave ones. There is also Partha's extremely mighty bow, Gandiva. This is capable of extending the kingdom and is alone the equal of one hundred thousand others. It is capable of withstanding exertions. It is as large as the king of grass.[50] It is the equal of all weapons and creates destruction among enemies. It is embellished with gold, divine, smooth, broad and without any blemishes. It can withstand heavy pressure. It is terrible and beautiful to look at. All the other bows are equally powerful and firm." Uttara replied, "It has been heard that a corpse is tied to this tree. I am a prince. How can I touch it with my hands? I have been born in the kshatriya lineage and that does not befit me. I am a great prince who knows about mantras and sacrifices. O Brihannada! If I touch it, my body will become as polluted as that of a bearer of corpses. How can you ask me to touch it and become the subject of condemnation?" Brihannada said, "O Indra among kings! You may become the subject of condemnation, but you will remain clean. Do not be frightened. There are bows here and no corpses. You are spirited and have

been born as the heir to the Matsya lineage. O son of a king! Why should I ask you to perform a reprehensible act?" Thus addressed by Partha, Virata's son, adorned in earrings, descended from the chariot and reluctantly climbed the shami tree.

'Dhananjaya, the destroyer of enemies, remained on the chariot and instructed him from there. "Remove the covers quickly." He removed the covers from every side and saw Gandiva and the other four bows. Having been freed, the bows were as resplendent as the rays of the sun. A divine radiance glowed, like the planets at the time of their risings. On seeing their forms, like sighing snakes, his body hair stood up and he was terrified for an instant. He then touched those radiant and giant bows. O king! Virata's son spoke these words to Arjuna.

'Uttara asked, "This supreme bow is worth a thousand crores of gold. It is embossed with one hundred golden eyes. Whom does it belong to? This supreme bow has excellent sides and is easy to hold. Its back shines with golden and tusked elephants. Whom does it belong to? The back of this supreme bow is embellished with sixty fireflies set in patterns made out of pure gold. Whom does it belong to? This supreme bow is dazzling in its lustre. The rays of three golden suns decorate it. Whom does it belong to? This supreme bow is adorned with gold and jewels and is decorated with golden locusts made out of pure gold. Whom does it belong to? These one thousand iron arrows are borne by feathers. They have gold and silver tips and are in golden quivers. Whom do they belong to? These large arrows are broad. They have the feathers of vultures and have been sharpened on stone. These arrows are completely made out of iron and are yellow, like the colour of turmeric. They have excellent tips. Whom do they belong to? This black quiver has the marks of five tigers and the ears of sows. It holds ten arrows. Whom does it belong to? These seven hundred arrows wish to drink blood. They are large and long and are entirely made out of copper. Whom do they belong to? These arrows have the feathers of parrots and the lower halves are well made. The upper halves are made of iron and have yellow embellishments made of gold. They have been sharpened on stone. Whom do these belong to? This long sword has a stone at the tip and stones at the back. It is in a large and excellent scabbard made out of tiger skin, decorated in golden patterns and tinkling with bells. Whom does this large sword belong to? This divine sword is without blemishes and has a golden hilt. Whom does it belong to? This unblemished sword is in a scabbard made out of cow skin. Whom does it belong to? It has been made out of gold in the country of the *nishadhas* and is capable of bearing a great weight. This sword with a golden hilt is in a scabbard made out of the skin of an animal with five nails.[51] It is excellent in form and is yellow like the sky. Whom does it belong to? This yellow and heavy sword is in a golden scabbard that is made out of molten gold and has the complexion of the fire. It is supreme and without blemishes. Whom does it belong to? O Brihannada! I am asking you. Tell me exactly. I have become overcome with great and extreme wonder at witnessing all these things."

‘Brihannada said, “The one you have asked about first is Partha’s bow Gandiva, famous in the worlds and capable of destroying enemy armies. It is supreme among all weapons and is embellished with pure gold. This is Arjuna’s supreme weapon. It is equal to one hundred thousand others and is the extender of kingdoms. Using this, Partha defeated gods and men in battle. For eternity, gods, danavas and gandharvas have worshipped it. Brahma held it earlier, for one thousand years. Then Prajapati held it for five hundred and three years,[52] Shakra for eighty-five, King Soma for five hundred and Varuna for a hundred years. Partha, borne by white steeds, has possessed it for sixty-five years. This supreme bow is extremely powerful and greatly divine. It is supreme in its resplendent form and is honoured by gods and mortals. That bow, with the golden grip and excellent sides, is Bhimasena’s. Using this, Partha,[53] the scorcher of enemies, conquered the entire eastern direction. O son of Virata! This supreme bow, with the handsome grip and decorated with fireflies, belongs to King Yudhishthira. The one on which radiant and golden suns blaze, resplendent with energy, is Nakula’s weapon. The one that is embellished with golden locusts is the bow of Madri’s son, Sahadeva. O son of Virata! These thousand arrows are as sharp as razors and are feathered. These arrows are like the venom of snakes and belong to Arjuna. Their energy blazes in battle and they are swift. When the warrior unleashes them in battle against enemies, they are not exhausted. These sharp arrows destroy enemies and belong to Bhima. They are broad and long and have the form of crescent moons. These arrows are yellow and have golden shafts and belong to Nakula. They have been sharpened on stone and are in a quiver that has the marks of five tigers. With this quiver, Madri’s intelligent son conquered the entire western direction in battle. These arrows that are as radiant as the sun and are throughout made of iron, belong to the intelligent Sahadeva. They are decorated and are capable of performing action. These great arrows are sharp, yellow, long-shafted and broad and belong to the king.[54] They have golden tufts and three joints. This long sword has the mark of a bee in the front and at the rear. It is firm and is capable of withstanding great burdens. It was used by Arjuna in battle. This extremely large sword has a sheath that is made of tiger skin and belongs to Bhimasena. It is divine and is capable of withstanding great burdens. It causes terror among enemies. This supreme sword has a golden hilt and belongs to the intelligent Kourava Dharmaraja. It has an excellent blade and quiver. This firm sword is capable of withstanding great burdens and belongs to Nakula. It is colourful and is in a sheath made out of the skin of an animal with five nails.[55] This giant sword is in a sheath that is made out of the skin of a cow and belongs to Sahadeva. It is firm and is capable of withstanding all burdens.”’

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‘Uttara said, “These weapons of the great-souled Parthas, who are swift in their deeds,

are decorated in gold and are resplendent in their beauty. But where are Partha Arjuna and Kouravya Yudhishthira, Nakula, Sahadeva and Pandava Bhimasena? All of them are great-souled and are capable of destroying all enemies. But after they lost their kingdom in the game of dice, nothing has been heard about them. Where is the famous Panchali Droupadi, a jewel among women? After they were defeated in the game of dice, Krishna followed them into the forest."

'Arjuna replied, "I am Partha Arjuna. The gamester is Yudhishthira. Ballava, who cooks dishes for your father, is Bhimasena. Nakula is the one who tends to the steeds and Sahadeva is with the cattle. Know that Sairandhri, because of whom the Kichakas were slain, is Droupadi."

'Uttara said, "I have heard ten names of Partha[56] earlier. I will have faith in your words if you can recount all of them to me."

'Arjuna replied, "I will tell you my ten names—Arjuna, Phalguna, Jishnu, Kiriti, Shvetavahana, Bibhatsu, Vijaya, Krishna, Savyasachi and Dhananjaya."

'Uttara asked, "Why are you named Vijaya? Why are you Shvetavahana? Why is your name Kiriti? Why are you Savyasachi? Why are you Arjuna, Phalguna, Jishnu, Krishna, Bibhatsu and Dhananjaya? Tell me everything in detail. I have heard the reasons why the brave one obtained those names."

'Arjuna replied, "I have conquered all the countries and obtained all their wealth. I stand in the midst of riches. That is the reason I am known as Dhananjaya.[57] When I go out to fight against those who are indomitable in battle, I never return without vanquishing them. That is the reason I am known as Vijaya.[58] When I fight in battle, white steeds with golden harnesses are yoked to my chariot. That is the reason I am Shvetavahana.[59] I was born on the slopes of the Himalayas when the two *nakshatras* of Purva and Uttara Phalguni were in the firmament.[60] That is the reason I am known as Phalguna. In earlier times, when I fought with the bulls among the danavas, Shakra gave me a diadem, as radiant as the sun, for my head. That is the reason I am Kiriti.[61] I have never committed a terrible act in battle. Therefore, I am known among gods and men as Bibhatsu.[62] Both my hands are right hands when I draw the Gandiva. Therefore, I am known among gods and men as Savyasachi.[63] My complexion is rare on this earth with its four corners. I perform pure deeds and that is the reason I am known as Arjuna.[64] I am difficult to reach. I cannot be repressed and I do the repressing. I am the son of the chastiser of Paka.[65] That is the reason I am famous among gods and men as Jishnu.[66] Affectionately, my father gave me my tenth name of Krishna, since the child had a dark complexion."[67]

Vaishampayana said, 'Then Virata's son showed his homage to Partha and said, "My name is Bhuminjaya and I am also known as Uttara. It is my good fortune that I have beheld Partha. O Dhananjaya! You are welcome. O red-eyed one! O mighty-armed one! O one with arms like the trunks of a king among elephants! You should pardon me for

what I have said out of ignorance. You have earlier performed many wonderful and difficult deeds. I have now overcome my fears and I feel great affection towards you."'

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'Uttara said, "O brave one! Ascend this large chariot with me as the charioteer. Which of the armies would you like to attack? As instructed by you, I will take you there."

'Arjuna replied, "O tiger among men! I am pleased that you no longer have any fear. O one who is skilled in battle! I will disperse all of your enemies in battle. O immensely intelligent one! Be steady and behold me fight with the enemies. I will accomplish extremely terrible deeds. Swiftly tie all these quivers to my chariot. Take that polished sword that is embellished with gold. I will fight with the Kurus and recover your animals. Protected by my arms, this chariot of yours, with its three poles and quivers, with many flags, will be like a city protected by turrets and gates. Its sides will be guarded by my resolution. When I am angered, the twang of my bow will make the axle sound like kettle drums. I, the wielder of the Gandiva, will be established on the chariot in battle. I am incapable of being vanquished by enemy soldiers. O son of Virata! Shed all your fears."

'Uttara said, "I am no longer afraid of them. I know that you are steadfast in battle. I know that you are the equal of Keshava, or Indra himself, in battle. But thinking about one thing, I am overcome by confusion. It is certain that I am foolish, because I cannot arrive at any conclusion. You have the form of a brave one and bear all the auspicious marks. Through what adverse circumstances did you become a eunuch? You are like the wielder of the trident,[68] or a king of the gandharvas, or the god Shatakratu.[69] I think of you roaming in the attire of a eunuch."

'Arjuna replied, "I am telling you truthfully, I have observed this vow for a year, on the instructions of my elder brother.[70] I have observed brahmacharya. O mighty-armed one! I am not a eunuch, but united with dharma, have followed another.[71] O son of a king! Know that my vow has been completed."[72]

'Uttara said, "I am extremely delighted today that my conclusions have not been proved wrong. Those who are supreme among men cannot be eunuchs like these. I have now obtained an aide in battle and can fight even with the immortals. My fears have been destroyed. Tell me what I should do. I will control your horses, which are capable of vanquishing the chariots of enemies. O bull among men! I have been trained in driving a chariot by an expert. O bull among men! Know that I have been trained as a charioteer, like Daruka for Vasudeva and Matali for Shakra.[73] The horse that is yoked to the right of the pole is like Sugriva and when his feet touch the ground, they can hardly be seen.[74] I think that the other beautiful horse that is yoked to the left of the pole is like Meghapushpa in its speed. I think that the beautiful horse with the golden harness that is yoked to the left of the axle is superior in strength and speed to Sainya. I think that

the one that is yoked to the right of the axle is superior in strength and speed to Balahaka. This chariot is capable of bearing an archer like you in battle. While stationed on this chariot, it is my view that you will be able to fight."'

Vaishampayana said, 'The brave and strong one[75] took the bracelets off from his arms. He donned beautiful wrist guards that would sound like drums. He tied his black and curly hair in a white garment. He swiftly strung Gandiva and drew the bow. When the bow was drawn, it uttered a great sound, as if a giant rock had been dashed against another rock. The earth trembled and a turbulent wind began to blow. The birds were confused in the sky. The giant trees began to tremble. From the sound that was like the roar of thunder, the Kurus got to know that Arjuna was on the chariot and was drawing the best of bows with his arms.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Having made Uttara his charioteer and having circumambulated the shami tree, Dhananjaya gathered all his weapons and marched out. The maharatha took down the banner with the lion and placed it below the shami tree.[76] He rode out with Uttara as the charioteer. He hoisted on the chariot the golden banner with the mark of a monkey with the tail of a lion, one created with divine illusion by Vishvakarma.[77] He thought of the favours of the fire god. Having divined his thoughts, he[78] instructed those beings to be on the flag. Maharatha Bibhatsu Kounteya Shvetavahana was established on the colourful chariot, with a flag and quivers. He donned his wrist guards and grasped his bow and arrows. With the supreme of monkeys on his banner, he set out in a northern direction. The strong one, the destroyer of enemies, blew powerfully on his deep-sounding and large conch shell and this made the body hair of his enemies stand up. At that sound, the swift horses knelt down on the ground. Uttara was terrified and sat down on the chariot. Kounteya Arjuna grasped the reins and made the horses stand up. He embraced and comforted Uttara and said, "O foremost among princes! Do not be frightened. O scorcher of enemies! You are a kshatriya. O tiger among men! Why are you despondent in the midst of the enemy? You have heard the sounds of conch shells before, as well as the loud sounds of kettle drums and the roar of elephants when they are stationed in battle formations in armies. Why are you then so frightened by the sound of the conch shell? Why is your form so despondent and why are you so terrified, as if you are an ordinary man?"

'Uttara replied, "I have heard the sounds of conch shells and the loud sounds of kettle drums, and also the roars of elephants when they are stationed in battle formations in armies. But never before, have I heard the sound of a conch shell like this. Never before, have I seen a banner like this. Never before, have I heard the sound of a bow twanging like this. My mind is terribly agitated from the sound of this conch shell, the twang of the bow and the roar of the chariot. I have lost sense of all the directions and my heart

is trembling. The banner has covered everything and the directions are no longer evident to me. The sound of the Gandiva has deafened my ears."

'Arjuna said, "Stand firmly on this chariot and to one side. Place your feet firmly on it. Grasp the reins firmly. I am going to blow the conch shell again."'

Vaishampayana said, 'The earth trembled from the sound of the conch shell, the roar of the chariot and the thunder of the Gandiva.

'Drona said, "From the roar of the chariot, the blast of the conch shell and the trembling of the earth, it can be no one other than Savyasachi. Our weapons are no longer shining and our horses have lost their spirits. Although there is kindling, the fires do not blaze. This does not augur well. All the animals are running towards the sun, wailing terribly. The crows are alighting on our standards. This does not augur well. The vultures[79] are flying towards our left and this portends great danger. The jackals are howling and running around in the midst of the army and are escaping uninjured. This portends great danger. I can see that your[80] body hair is standing up. The soldiers have already been conquered and no one wishes to fight. Their faces are pale and all the warriors have lost their senses. Let us let the cattle go. Let us stand here, armed and arranged in battle formations."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'In that battle, King Duryodhana then spoke to Bhishma, Drona, the tiger among charioteers, and the great maharatha Kripa. "Both Karna and I have told the preceptor this several times. I will say it again, because I am not satisfied with having spoken it earlier. When they were defeated, our pledge was that they would dwell for twelve years in the forest and undetected for one year in any country. The thirteenth year is not yet over. Bibhatsu, who was supposed to live in disguise, has appeared before us. If Bibhatsu arrives before the period of concealment is over, the Pandavas will have to dwell again in the forest for twelve years. Their avarice may have made them forget, or we may have been confused. Bhishma should know whether they have exceeded, or fallen short of, the stipulated period. If things are not clear, there is always scope for doubt. Something that is thought of in one way, may turn out to be another. We followed the northern direction in order to fight with the army of the Matsyas. However, if Bibhatsu arrives, we cannot turn away. We came here to fight with the Matsyas, on behalf of the Trigartas. The many depredations of the Matsyas have been recounted to us. They[81] sought refuge with us out of fear and we have given them our promise. The arrangement was that they would first, on the afternoon of the seventh lunar day, seize the great wealth of cattle of the Matsyas and we would again do the same at sunrise on the eighth lunar day. They may not have been able to find the cattle, or they may have been defeated. They may have deceived us and concluded an alliance with the Matsyas. Or the Matsya, together with his countrymen, may have

defeated them. With his entire army, he is now advancing towards us to fight. It is possible that an extremely valorous one among them is leading the way, so as to defeat us. Or it may be Matsya himself. Whether it is the king of Matsya, or whether it is Bibhatsu, who has arrived, it is our agreement that all of us must fight. Why are our supreme charioteers, Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Vikarna and Drona's son[82] standing idly on their chariots? All of these maharathas seem to be confused at this time. There is no other option but to fight. Therefore, resolve yourselves accordingly. If, to save our cattle, we have to confront in battle the god who wields the vajra[83] or Yama himself, who would flee to Hastinapura? There may be doubt about the horses. But who among the foot soldiers will remain alive, even if they have been pierced by arrows and dispersed in the deserted forest?[84] Setting the preceptor aside, let us decide on the course of action. He[85] knows their[86] minds and tries to terrify us. I can perceive his special affection towards Arjuna. As soon as he sees Bibhatsu arrive, that is the reason he praises him. Decide on a course of action so that our army is not destroyed in a foreign land, in the great forest and in the summer. Decide on a course of action so that this army is not confused and routed by the enemy. Having heard the neighing of horses, why should one praise the enemy? Horses always neigh, whether they are walking or standing. The wind always blows. Vasava[87] always showers down. The roar of the thunder can be heard many times. What does this have to do with Partha and why should he be praised? That can only be out of love towards him and hatred and anger towards us. Preceptors are indeed compassionate and wise. They can see what is wrong. But they should never be consulted when a great danger arrives. Learned ones are adornments when they recount their beautiful tales in fine palaces, assemblies and dwelling houses. Learned ones are adornments when they perform wonderful acts in assemblies of people and when sacrificial offerings have to be prepared. They know the weaknesses of others and human character. Learned ones are adornments when they point out defects in the preparation of food. But ignore learned ones when they praise the qualities of enemies. Instead, decide on a course of action so that the enemy can be killed. Let the cattle be protected. Let the soldiers immediately be arranged in battle formations. Arrange for guards in the appropriate places, so that we can fight with the enemy."'

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'Karna said, "I see that all you honourable ones[88] are frightened and terrified. All of you do not wish to fight and are standing idly. Whether it is the king of Matsya or Bibhatsu who has come, I will restrain him, the way the shoreline holds back the abode of *makaras*.[89] Arrows with straight feathers will be shot from my bow and they will not be repulsed, like gliding snakes. They have golden tufts and are extremely sharp at the tip. Released from my hand, these arrows will cover Partha, like locusts covering a tree.

These winged shafts will firmly strike against the string of the bow, and the sound of the slapping of palms will be like that of a kettledrum. Bibhatsu has concentrated for eight and five years[90] and is fondly looking forward to a battle in which he will strike me. Kounteya, with the qualities of a brahmana, is the right receptacle to receive thousands of arrows shot by me. This great archer is famous in the worlds. O best of the Kurus! But in no way am I inferior to Arjuna. I will release these golden arrows, shafted with the feathers of vultures, and the sky will seem to be covered with fireflies. I gave my word to Dhritarashtra's son[91] earlier and I will repay that debt today. I will kill Arjuna today. My feathered arrows will split the sky and envelope the directions. They will appear like locusts in the firmament. Partha's touch is like that of Indra's vajra and he is as energetic as the great Indra. But I will oppress him, the way an elephant is oppressed with flaming torches. He is as unassailable as the fire. But I will assail him with swords, spears and arrows. The flaming Pandava burns down enemies. But the force of my horses will be like a storm and the roar of my mass of chariots will be like thunder. The shower of my arrows will be like a great cloud and I will pacify Pandava. The arrows released from my bow will be like the virulent poison of snakes to Partha. Those arrows will pierce him, like serpents gliding into a termite hill. I have obtained weapons from Jamadagni's son, supreme among rishis.[92] Using their power, I can fight with Vasava himself. With an arrow,[93] I will kill the monkey that is stationed on the top of his standard. It will fall down on the ground today, uttering a terrible roar. The other beings who are stationed on the enemy's flag will be tormented. Oppressed by me, they will fly in all the directions and their wails will rise up into the sky. Today I will uproot with its roots the stake that has been impaled in Duryodhana's heart for a long time. I will bring down Bibhatsu from his chariot. Today, the Kouravas will see Partha bereft of his chariot, with his horses dead and his manliness destroyed, sighing like a serpent. Let the Kurus go as they wish, taking only the riches[94] with them. Or let them be stationed on their chariots and witness my battle."'

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'Kripa said, "O Radheya! Your mind is always wicked and you are inclined towards war. You do not understand natural objectives, nor do you consider the consequences. We should think about the many courses of action that are laid down in the sacred texts. Those who are learned in the ancient accounts have said that a war is the worst. A war guarantees victory only if it is at the right time and the right place. But if it is conducted at the wrong time, it does not bring any fruits. Valour at the right place and the right time is recommended for our welfare. We must decide on a course of action in accordance with what is favourable. The learned do not gauge how much of load a chariot can take on the words of its maker. Reflecting on all this, it is not desirable for us to encounter Partha. He saved the Kurus alone and he satisfied Agni alone.[95] He

alone spent five years in the pursuit of brahmacharya.[96] He was alone when he raised Subhadra onto a chariot and summoned Krishna to a duel.[97] In the forest, Krishna won back Krishna when she was being abducted.[98] He alone spent five years in Shakra's abode, learning the use of weapons.[99] He extended the fame of the Kurus by defeating Samyamini alone.[100] That destroyer of enemies swiftly vanquished Chitrasena, king of the gandharvas, in a battle, together with his invincible army.[101] In a similar way, he alone defeated the Nivatakavacha and Kalakhanja danavas, whom even the gods could not slay.[102] O Karna! What act have you single-handedly performed earlier? Have you, like each of them,[103] brought lords of the earth under your sway? Even Indra himself is incapable of facing Partha in battle. He who wishes to fight with him had better take some medicine. You wish to extend your right hand and use your forefinger to pluck out a fang from an angry and virulent snake. Or while roaming alone in the forest, and without a goad,[104] you wish to climb onto a mad elephant and drive it into the city. Or smearing yourself with clarified butter and attired in bark, you wish to pass through a blazing fire that has been kindled with clarified butter, fat and marrow. What manliness is there in tying a giant rock around one's neck, binding oneself, and then trying to swim across the ocean? O Karna! If one is unskilled in weapons and extremely weak, and yet wishes to fight with Partha, who is skilled in weapons and strong, that shows foolishness. He has been deceived by us for thirteen years. He is now like a lion that has been freed from its nooses. He will destroy all of us. We have unwittingly run into Partha waiting alone, like a fire hidden in a well. We confront supreme danger. Although Partha is invincible in battle, we will fight him together when he comes upon us. Let the soldiers be armed and stationed in battle formations. O Karna! Drona, Duryodhana, Bhishma, you, Drona's son and I—all of us will fight Partha. Do not be rash. Though Partha is fierce, like the one with an upraised vajra in his hand,[105] if all six chariots[106] are united together, we will be able to repulse him. With the soldiers arranged in battle formations and with the supreme archers ready, we will fight Arjuna in battle, like the danavas against Vasava."'

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'Ashvatthama said, "The cattle have not been conquered yet. They have not crossed the boundary. Nor have they reached Hastinapura. O Karna! Why are you boasting? Even after having won many battles, obtaining a great deal of riches and winning many enemy lands, there is no manliness in boasting. The fire burns without a word. The sun shines in silence. The earth bears its beings, mobile and immobile, in silence. The deeds of the four varnas have been laid down by the learned ones, so that they may achieve the objective of wealth without committing a sin. Having studied the Vedas, brahmanas must sacrifice and officiate at sacrifices. Kshatriyas must use the bow and sacrifice, but officiate at the sacrifices of others. Having acquired objects, vaishyas must perform

deeds for the brahman.[107] Having obtained the earth in accordance with the sacred texts, those immensely fortunate ones behaved well towards their preceptors, even if they were devoid of qualities. What kshatriya should be satisfied at having obtained a kingdom through gambling? That is cruel and should be for other ordinary men. Having obtained riches through deceit and fraud, what wise man will boast of it, like a vendor of flesh? In which duel in battle have you vanquished Dhananjaya, Nakula or Sahadeva? Whose riches have you robbed? Has Yudhishthira, or Bhima, supreme among strong ones, ever been defeated by you? And in which battle did you win over Krishna?[108] O performer of evil deeds! She was dragged into the assembly hall in a single garment, when she was in season. In search of gain, you have severed the great root of a sandalwood tree.[109] O brave one! You made them perform tasks and what did Vidura have to say then?[110] We have seen that men exhibit conciliation, to the best of their ability. So do other beings, even insects and ants. The Pandavas are incapable of pardoning Droupadi's molestation. Dhananjaya has appeared for the destruction of the sons of Dhritarashtra. Appearing as a learned one, you speak your words repeatedly. But will Jishnu not end this enmity, leaving no vestiges left?[111] Kunti's son Dhananjaya is not frightened of fighting the gods, the gandharvas, the asuras or the rakshasas. When he is enraged and descends on anyone in battle, he destroys him, like a tree is brought down through Garuda's force. He is superior to you in valour. He is equal to the king of the gods[112] in archery. He is Vasudeva's[113] equal in battle. Who will not show homage to Partha? He will fight and destroy divine[114] with divine, human with human, weapons with other weapons. What man is Arjuna's equal? Those who know about dharma know that a student comes only after a son. That is the reason why Drona loves Pandava. Will you fight with Pandava the way you gambled and won Indraprastha and the way you dragged Krishna to the assembly hall? This wise uncle of yours, Shakuni of Gandhara,[115] is a deceitful gambler and is learned about the dharma of kshatriyas. Let him fight here now. Gandiva does not cast dice, not *krita*, nor *dvapara*.[116] Gandiva releases flaming, sharp and pointed arrows. When released from Gandiva, dreadful, extremely energetic and tufted with vulture feathers, they can even pierce the interiors of mountains. Antaka, Shamana, death[117] and the fire with the mare's head[118] leave something behind, but not an enraged Dhananjaya. Let the preceptor[119] fight with Dhananjaya if he wishes. I will not fight with him. Our purpose is to fight with Matsya, if he comes here, following the footprints of the cattle."'

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'Bhishma said, "Drona's son sees it well. Kripa sees it well. Karna wishes to fight, in accordance with the dharma of kshatriyas. No learned man can find fault with the preceptor. Considering the time and the place, it is my view that we should fight. What learned man who possesses five armed enemies, as radiant as the sun,[120] will not be

confused at their ascendancy? Even men, who are conversant with dharma, are confused when it comes to their own interests. O king! That is the reason I am speaking these words, whether they please you or not. What Karna spoke, was for the purpose of inciting enterprise in us. The preceptor's son[121] should pardon us, because a great task has to be undertaken. Kounteya has arrived and this is not the time for dissension. You,[122] the preceptor and Kripa must pardon everything. You are skilled in the use of weapons, like the sun in its radiance. Just as spots can never be removed from the moon, you have the power of brahmanas and *brahmastras* are established in you.[123] The four Vedas may be seen together in one place,[124] and the power of kshatriyas in another single place. We have not heard of these two together in any person, other than the preceptor of the Bharatas and his son. This is my view. Brahmastras and the Vedas are not seen together anywhere else. The preceptor's son should forgive. This is not the time for dissension. Let us all fight in unity with the son of the chastiser of Paka,[125] who has now arrived. The learned ones have spoken about the weaknesses of an army and it is the view of the learned ones that dissension is the foremost and the worst."

'Ashvatthama replied, "Let the preceptor forgive and there should be peace here again. If the preceptor was insulted, that was done in anger."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! At that, Duryodhana asked Drona's pardon, together with Karna, Bhishma and the great-souled Kripa.'

'Drona said, "I have already been pacified by the words that Shantanu's son Bhishma spoke first. We should now engage and decide on a supreme course of action so that when Duryodhana is engaged, no clouds descend on the soldiers, out of rashness or out of confusion. Dhananjaya would not have shown himself, had the period of dwelling in the forest not been over. He will not pardon us today, without having recovered the riches.[126] Let us follow a course of action so that he cannot confront and defeat the sons of Dhritarashtra in any way. O Gangeya![127] Remember the words that Duryodhana had addressed you earlier and speak what is right."'

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'Bhishma said, "Parts of *kalas*, *muhurtas*,[128] days, fortnights, months, nakshatras, planets, seasons and years are joined together and the wheel of time revolves in accordance with these measurements of time. Because of an excess of time and deviations in the paths of bodies in the sky, there is an addition of two months in every cycle of five years.[129] I think that calculated in this way, during the passage of thirteen years, there are five additional months and twelve nights.[130] They have done everything that they had promised to do. Knowing this for certain, Bibhatsu has arrived. All of them are great-souled and knowledgeable about dharma and artha. They have Yudhishthira as the king. Why should they act contrary to dharma? The Kounteyas are not avaricious and they have accomplished a difficult feat. They have Yudhishthira as their king. Why should

they act contrary to dharma? They do not wish to acquire the kingdom by any means possible. Else, the descendants of the Kuru lineage would have displayed their valour at that time. They are bound by the nooses of dharma and they have not deviated from the vow of kshatriyas. If there is a choice between being called untruthful and confronting defeat, the Parthas would choose death over being untruthful. But the time has now arrived. Such is the valour of those bulls among men, the Pandavas, who are protected by the wielder of the vajra, that they will not give up what is their due. We must counter in battle the supreme among those who are skilled in weapons. Therefore, let everything be swiftly done, so that our objectives are not taken over by others, and so that the virtuous ones of the world do not think that we are against welfare. O Kourava! O Indra among kings! I have never witnessed a battle where success has been assured. Dhananjaya has arrived. When one engages in battle, there is prosperity and adversity, victory and defeat. One will confront one or the other. I have seen this without a doubt. Therefore, let us carry out the tasks that are needed for war, as long as those deeds are in conformity with dharma. Dhananjaya has arrived."

'Duryodhana replied, "O grandfather! I will not give the kingdom away to the Pandavas. Therefore, without any delay, let us make arrangements for the battle."

'Bhishma said, "If it pleases you to listen, hear what my advice is. Take one-fourth of the army and quickly leave for the city. Let another one-fourth gather the cattle and leave. We will counter Pandava with the remaining half of the army, or Matsya if he arrives again, or Shatakratu himself. Let the preceptor be stationed in the middle, with Ashvatthama on the left. Let the wise Kripa, the son of Sharadvat, protect the right flank. Karna, the armoured son of the suta, should be stationed in the front. I will station myself behind the entire army, so as to protect it."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'The maharatha Kouravyas thus arranged themselves in battle formations. Arjuna approached swiftly, his chariot uttering a roar. They saw the top of his standard. They heard the roar of his chariot. They heard the terrible sound of Gandiva, when it was twanged. On seeing all this, and on seeing the maharatha, the wielder of Gandiva, arrive, Drona spoke these words. "The top of the standard, which can be seen from a distance, belongs to Partha. That noise is like that of a monsoon cloud and the monkey is roaring. The best of charioteers is stationed on his chariot and he is supreme among charioteers. He draws Gandiva, the best of bows, with a sound like that of thunder. These two arrows have fallen together at my feet. These two other arrows have passed me by, touching my ears. Having dwelt in the forest and having accomplished superhuman deeds, Partha is now honouring me and putting questions to my ears."

'Arjuna said, "O charioteer! Stop the horses at a place from where I can use arrows on

that army, until I am able to see that wretch among the Kuru lineage[131] in the midst of the soldiers. When I see that insolent one, I will ignore all the others and pounce down on his head. Then all of them will be defeated. Drona is stationed there and Drona's son is after him. Bhishma, Kripa and Karna, great archers, are stationed there. But I do not see the king[132] there. He must have gathered the cattle and left. Anxious to save his life, he must have resorted to the southern road. Leaving the chariots and soldiers here, go to where Suyodhana is. O son of Virata! That is the place where I will fight, because the battle there will not be without meat. Having defeated him, I will gather the cattle and return."'

Vaishampayana said, 'At these words, Virata's son carefully reined the horses. He used the reins to restrain them from where the bulls among the Kurus were. He goaded the mounts in the direction towards which Duryodhana had gone. Ignoring the assembled chariots, Shvetavahana left. Drona got to know his intentions and spoke these words. "Bibhatsu does not wish to station himself here, when the king is far away. He is advancing swiftly. Let us attack his flanks. When he is enraged, no one can fight him single-handedly in battle, other than the god with the thousand eyes[133] and Devaki's son Krishna. What will we do with these cattle and these great riches, if Duryodhana sinks like a boat in Partha's water?" Meanwhile, Bibhatsu went on and announced his name himself. He swiftly covered the soldiers with arrows that were like locusts. Because of the mass of arrows unleashed by Partha, the warriors were dispersed. They could not see the earth or the sky, because they were enveloped with arrows. They had no inclination to fight. But nor did they have an inclination to run away. In their minds, they honoured Partha's swiftness. He then blew the conch shell that makes the body hair of enemies stand up. He drew his excellent bow and incited the beings on his flag. At the sound of the conch shell and the roar of the chariot's wheels, and those of the inhuman beings who resided on the flag, the cattle raised their tails up and wailed on all the sides. They returned towards the southern direction."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Having routed the enemy's soldiers and having conquered the cattle, Arjuna, the supreme of archers, in a desire to do that which brought him pleasure, advanced in Duryodhana's direction. The cattle ran away towards the Matsyas. Thinking that Kiriti had been successful and seeing him advance towards Duryodhana, the foremost among the Kurus swiftly descended on him. Beholding their many soldiers, arranged in deep battle formations, with many flags, the destroyer of enemies spoke these words to Matsya Virata's son. "Use these golden reins to swiftly drive these white horses in that direction. Endeavour to quickly take me to where that mass of lion-like warriors is gathered. That evil-minded son of the suta wishes to fight me, like an elephant against another elephant. O prince! Duryodhana's favours have made him

insolent. Take me to him." Using the golden reins and driving the large horses that were as swift as the wind, Virata's son broke through that army of charioteers and bore Pandava to the middle. On seeing this, maharatha Chitrasena, Samgramajit, Shatrusaha and Jaya advanced to help Karna and countered the advancing Bharata[134] with their arrows and spears. With the flames of his bow and the scorching force of his arrows, that foremost among men burnt down the chariots of those bulls among the Kurus, like a fire consuming a forest. A terrible battle ensued. *Atiratha*[135] Vikarna, foremost among the Kurus, fiercely attacked Partha, Bhima's junior, from a chariot and showered down arrows on him. He[136] drew the firmly stringed bow that was embellished with the best of gold and routed Vikarna. He shattered the standard that was on his chariot. With his standard destroyed, he[137] fled. Unable to control his anger, wishing to accomplish superhuman deeds and seeing the oppression of the mass of soldiers, Shatrumtapa showered down arrows on the scorcher of enemies. He hurled the nail of a tortoise[138] at Partha. Pierced by that atiratha king and immersed amidst the flags of the Kurus, he pierced Shatrumtapa with five swift arrows and killed his charioteer with ten. Having been pierced by that bull among the Bharatas, with an arrow that sliced through the armour on his body, the king[139] fell down dead on the ground, like a tree[140] dislodged from the peak of a mountain by the wind. Those brave bulls among charioteers were shattered in that battle by a braver bull among charioteers. They trembled, like a gigantic forest that shivers at the time when a gale strikes it. Those foremost young ones among men were killed by Partha. In their fine garments, they seemed to be asleep on the ground. They were the granters of riches and were like Vasava in their valour. But they were vanquished by Vasava's son in battle. They were like grown elephants from the Himalayas, clad in armour made out of iron and gold. Thus slaying the enemies on the field of battle, the wielder of the Gandiva, foremost among men, began to roam around in that battlefield in different directions. He was like a forest fire at the end of the summer. At the time of spring, the wind that blows in the sky scatters the leaves. Like that, Kiriti scattered his enemies and the atiratha roamed around on the battlefield on his chariot. Vaikartana's younger brother, spirited Samgramajit, drove red horses and he killed those steeds. With a single arrow, he sliced off his crowned head. On seeing his brother slain, Vaikartana, the suta's son, exhibited his valour, like a king of elephants displaying his tusks, or like a tiger attacking a large buffalo. Vaikartana attacked Pandava with twelve arrows. He pierced the bodies of all the horses and that of Virata's son with those arrows. It was like a king among elephants being struck by an elephant. He[141] took out sharp arrows from his quiver and stretching the string of the bow right up to his ear, pierced the body of the suta's son with his arrows. With arrows unleashed like lightning from his bow, the destroyer of enemies pierced him in battle, in the arms, the thighs, the head, the forehead, the neck and in all the parts of the chariot. Thus wounded by the arrows shot by Partha, and scorched by Pandava's arrows, like a swift

elephant that has been defeated by another elephant, Vaikartana fled from the forefront of the battle.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'After Radheya fled, the others, with Duryodhana in the lead, attacked with their respective armies and showered Pandava with arrows. On seeing those many soldiers, arranged in battle formations, attacking him with arrows, Virata's son said, "What is your intention? O Jishnu! You are stationed on this beautiful chariot and I am your charioteer. Towards which part of the army will I advance next? I will go where you ask me to."

'Arjuna replied, "O Uttara! You can see the red-eyed one clad in the skin of a tiger. He is unhurt. He is stationed on a chariot with a blue flag. That is Kripa and those are his chariots and soldiers. Take me to him. I will show that firm-bowed one my dexterity in use of weapons. The one with the pure and golden water pot on his flag is the preceptor Drona himself, supreme among those who have knowledge of all weapons. O brave one! Circumambulate him cheerfully, without obstructing him in any way. That is the eternal dharma. If Drona strikes at my body first and I strike him back in return, he will not be angered. There is one who can be seen not far from him, with a bow on the top of his standard. That is the preceptor's son, maharatha Ashvatthama. I have always honoured him, and so have all the wielders of weapons. When you encounter his chariot, restrain again and again. There is one in that mass of chariots, clad in golden armour. He is stationed, surrounded by one-third of the army. An elephant on a golden flag can be seen at the top of his standard. That is Dhritarashtra's son, the illustrious King Suyodhana. O brave one! Take this chariot before him. He can destroy the chariots of enemies. The king is indomitable in energy and is irrepressible in battle. In swiftness in the use of weapons, he is regarded as the foremost among Drona's pupils. But I will show him many times what it means to be swift in use of weapons in battle. The one who has a beautiful elephant's enclosure embellished on his standard is Vaikartana Karna, whom you have known earlier.[142] When you approach the chariot of that evil-souled Radheya, be careful, because he always challenges me in a battle. There is one whose flag is blue and is decorated with five stars. The brave one is stationed on his chariot, his hands encased in guards. He has a large bow. He is stationed on his chariot and his supreme flag is decorated with stars and the sun. A white and unblemished umbrella is held aloft his head. He is at the head of a great mass of chariots, with many flags and pennants. He is like the sun stationed before a mass of clouds. His golden armour can be seen, like the moon and the sun. His golden helmet seems to trouble me. This is Shantanu's son Bhishma, a grandfather to all of us. He is blessed with royal prosperity, but obeys Duryodhana's instructions. You should approach him last, so that he does not cause an obstruction for me. When I fight with him, control the horses

carefully."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O king! Virata's son carefully drove Savyasachi to Kripa, who was ready to engage with Dhananjaya.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'The army of the Kurus could be seen, with the foremost among archers. It moved like clouds stirred by gentle winds at the end of the summer. The horses were nearby, mounted by armed warriors. There were elephants that were terrible in form, goaded by clubs and hooks. O king! Then Shakra arrived, riding handsomely, and with the masses of gods—together with the Vishvadevas, the Ashvins and the masses of Maruts. Crowded with gods, yakshas, gandharvas and giant serpents, the cloudless sky was dazzling, as if with the planets. They had come to witness the power of their weapons, when used by humans and the terrible and great fight that was imminent between Bhishma and Arjuna. The *vimana*[143] of the king of the gods had one hundred thousand golden pillars. It possessed other gems and jewels that held up the palace. It was divine and was capable of travelling anywhere at will. It was decorated with all kinds of jewels. It was radiant in the sky. Together with Vasava, there were thirty-three gods there and gandharvas, rakshasas, snakes, ancestors and maharshis. There were the kings Vasumana, Balaksha, Supratardana, Ashtaka, Shibi, Yayati, Nahusha, Gaya, Manu, Kshupa, Raghu, Bhanu, Krishashva, Sagara and Shala. They were extremely resplendent and could be seen on the vimana of the king of the gods. Agni, Isha, Soma, Varuna, Prajapati, Dhata, Vidhata, Kubera, Yama, Alambusha, Ugrasena and the gandharva Tumburu were there, each in the place appointed for him and each in his vimana. All the classes of gods, the Siddhas and the supreme rishis arrived to witness the fight between Arjuna and the Kurus. The sacred fragrance of all the divine garlands was everywhere, like flowers in the forests at the beginning of spring. The red and red-tinged umbrellas of the gods could be seen while they stood there, and their garments, garlands and fans. All the dust of the earth subsided and it was permeated by rays. Carrying the divine fragrance, the wind gratified the warriors. The sky seemed to be colourfully decorated and ornamented by the vimanas that had already arrived and those that were arriving. These were decorated with many gems and were colourful and wonderful, brought by the supreme gods.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'The great-spirited Kripa was supreme among wielders of weapons. He was immensely valorous and powerful. Meanwhile, in a desire to fight with Arjuna, that maharatha arrived. Those two immensely powerful charioteers, like the sun, got ready to fight. They stationed themselves, looking like two clouds in the autumn. Partha was famous in the world. Drawing the supreme weapon of Gandiva, he

discharged many iron arrows that were capable of piercing the heart. But using sharp arrows and iron arrows that drank blood, Kripa sliced Partha's arrows into hundreds of thousands of pieces, before they could reach him. At that, maharatha Partha was enraged, and exhibiting many circular movements, enveloped the directions with a shower of arrows. The lord Partha, whose soul was infinite, covered the sky with arrows and unleashed hundreds of them on Kripa. He was hit by sharp arrows that were like the crests of fire and enraged, released one thousand arrows on the infinitely energetic Partha. The great-souled Kripa roared on the field of battle. Then the brave Arjuna released four swift arrows, golden at the tips and with straight shafts, from Gandiva and pierced his[144] horses. The four horses were pierced with those excellent arrows. Struck by those sharp arrows that were like flaming serpents, all the horses suddenly reared up and Kripa was dislodged from his place. When the descendant of the Kuru lineage[145] saw that Goutama[146] had been dislodged from his place, the destroyer of enemy warriors did not pierce him, with a desire to preserve his honour. Having regained his position, Goutama swiftly pierced Savyasachi with ten arrows that were shafted with the feathers of herons. Then Partha sliced his bow with a sharp arrow and made it fall down from his hand. He broke off the armour with other sharp arrows that pierced the heart. However, Partha did not pierce the body. Freed of the armour, his body was radiant, like a snake shedding its skin at the right time. When one bow had been cut down by Partha, Goutama grasped another and strung it. It was extraordinary. Kunti's son cut that down too, with arrows that had smooth shafts. In this way, Sharadvat's son took up many other bows in his hand. But Pandava, the destroyer of enemy warriors, cut them all down. With all his arrows shattered, the powerful charioteer picked up a javelin and hurled it at Pandu's son, like flaming lightning. That javelin was embellished with gold and descended from the sky, like a giant meteor. But Arjuna cut it down with ten arrows. When it was brought down onto the ground by the intelligent Partha, it shattered into ten pieces. In between, Kripa grasped arrows and a bow and swiftly pierced Partha with ten sharp arrows. The greatly energetic Partha was angered in battle. He retaliated with thirteen arrows that had been sharpened on stone, as energetic as the fire. He struck down the yoke with one and used four arrows to kill the four horses. Using a sixth, he sliced off the charioteer's head from the body. In that battle, the immensely strong one cut down the bamboo poles with three and the axles of the wheels with two. With a twelfth arrow, he sliced down the standard. Then smilingly, Phalguna, smote Kripa on the chest with a thirteenth arrow that was like the vajra. His bow was shattered. He was bereft of his chariot. His horses were slain. His charioteer was dead. Kripa quickly jumped down with a club in his hand and hurled a club. But that heavy and decorated club was repulsed by Arjuna with his arrows. To save the intolerant Sharadvat in that field of battle, all the warriors then showered Partha with arrows from all sides. Virata's son, the charioteer, then turned the horses to the left,

executing a *yamaka* turn,[147] so as to restrain those fighters. Extremely swiftly, those bulls among men then took Kripa, who was without a chariot, away from Kunti's son Dhananjaya.'

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'Arjuna said, "O fortunate one! O venerable one! A golden altar, as radiant as the crest of the fire, is held aloft a golden standard, decorated with golden flags. That is Drona's army. Take me there. His horses are seen to be red and large and they have been trained to bear well. They are quiet and have the complexion of coral. Their faces have the hue of copper and they are pleasant to look at. They are yoked to his supreme chariot and they have been trained in every kind of knowledge. He has long arms and is extremely energetic. He is endowed with strength and beauty. He is famous in all the worlds. He is the powerful Bharadvaja.[148] He is the equal of Ushanas[149] in his intelligence, the equal of Brihaspati[150] in his knowledge of policy. The four Vedas are vested in him, and brahmacharya too. All the divine weapons, with means of withdrawing them, and the entire knowledge of archery,[151] are always vested in him. Forgiveness, self-control, truthfulness, non-violence, uprightness—these and many other qualities exist in that supreme of brahmanas. I wish to fight with that immensely fortunate one in battle. O Uttara! Therefore, swiftly bear me to the preceptor."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Thus spoken to by Arjuna, Virata's son urged the horses, with golden harnesses, in Bharadvaja's direction. Pandava, supreme among charioteers, descended with great force. Drona advanced towards Partha, like a mad elephant towards another. He blew his conch shell, with the roar of a hundred drums, and the entire army was agitated like the ocean. On seeing those excellent red horses mix in battle with ones that were the colour of swans and as swift as the mind,[152] all the men who were in that fight were amazed. They saw those two charioteers, endowed with valour, in the forefront of the battle, the preceptor and the disciple, Drona and Partha. They were undefeated, learned, intelligent and immensely strong. Each was like the other and they engaged each other. On seeing this, the great army of the Bharatas trembled repeatedly. On reaching Drona's chariot with his own chariot, the valorous maharatha Partha smiled in delight. The mighty-armed Kounteya, the destroyer of enemy warriors, honoured him and spoke to him in soft and conciliatory words. "We have lived the stipulated duration in the forest. We now wish for the act in return. Do not be angry with us. You are always invincible in battle. O unblemished one! I will not strike you first, unless you strike me. I have decided this in accordance with my intelligence. Now do what you deem to be fit." Thus addressed, Drona despatched more than twenty arrows at him. But Partha, swift of hand, sliced them down before they could reach him. Displaying his swiftness in discharge of weapons, the valorous Drona showered Partha's chariot with a thousand arrows. Thus the duel between Bharadvaja

and Kiriti commenced. In that battle, both equally released tufted arrows, blazing in energy, at each other. Both of them were famous for their deeds, both were as swift as the wind. Both were knowledgeable in the use of divine weapons. Both were extremely energetic. When they unleashed their nets of arrows, they confounded the kings. All the assembled warriors were astounded and applauded and honoured the release of arrows. "Who but Phalguna is capable of countering Drona in battle? The dharma of kshatriyas is terrible. He has to fight with his preceptor." These were the words spoken by those who were stationed in the forefront of that battle.

'Those two brave maharathas drew near and covered each other with arrows, to defeat the other. Bharadvaja was angered and drew an invincible and large bow that was plated with gold at the back. He countered Phalguna. He discharged a net of arrows towards Arjuna's chariot. They were as bright as the sun and had been sharpened on stone. They shrouded the rays of the sun. The mighty-armed maharatha pierced Partha with extremely fast and sharp arrows, like clouds showering a mountain with rain. Pandava happily grasped the divine bow Gandiva, capable of destroying enemies at great speed and capable of bearing a supreme burden. He released many colourful and golden arrows from that bow and repulsed the valorous Bharadvaja's shower of arrows. It was extraordinary. Partha Dhananjaya roamed around on his chariot and it was a sight fit to behold. He displayed all his weapons simultaneously in all directions. With his arrows, he covered the entire sky with one large shadow. Drona could no longer be seen, as if he was enshrouded in fog. When he was covered with these supreme arrows, his form seemed to be like that of a mountain, with fires blazing in every direction. On seeing that his chariot was covered by Partha's arrows in that battle, he drew his beautiful bow, with a roar that was like that of the clouds. He drew that supreme and terrible weapon, which was like a circle of fire. Drona, the adornment of assemblies, then countered all those arrows. A great sound arose, like that when bamboos are burnt. Gold-tufted arrows were discharged from his supreme bow. The one whose soul was immeasurable enveloped the directions and the rays of the sun. Those arrows were golden-tufted and straight. When they traversed the sky, they were seen to be like many beings.[153] The tufted arrows were released from Drona's bow and it seemed as if there was one long and single arrow in the sky.[154] Thus releasing great arrows that were decorated in gold, those two brave ones covered the sky, as if with meteors. Decorated with the feathers of herons and peacocks, the arrows looked like a flock of geese travelling in the autumn sky. There ensued a terrible and fearful battle between the great-souled Drona and Pandava, like that between Vritra and Vasava.[155] They wounded each other, like elephants with their tusks. They shot arrows at each other from bows that were completely stretched. They fiercely decorated that field of battle. From one part of the battlefield to another, they released divine weapons. Arjuna, supreme among victorious ones, used sharp arrows to counter the arrows, sharpened on

stone, released by the best of preceptors. Indra's son displayed his own terrible aspect and swiftly covered the sky with many arrows.

'Drona, foremost among teachers and supreme among the wielders of arms, began to play with the supremely energetic Arjuna, tiger among men, who was trying to kill him in that battle. He used arrows with straight shafts. Bharadvaja unleashed divine weapons in that great battle. Phalguna countered every weapon with another weapon. The duel between those two angry and intolerant lions among men was like that between the gods and the danavas. Drona released Aindra, Vayavya and Agneya weapons[156] and Pandava used his own weapons to devour them. Those two brave and great archers released sharp arrows and covered the entire sky, like a shadow, with showers of arrows. When Arjuna released arrows and they descended on the bodies,[157] the sound that was heard was like that of lightning on mountains. O lord of the earth! Elephants, charioteers and horses looked like blossoming kimshuka flowers,[158] drenched in blood. When they fell down, the arms of the maharathas were adorned with colourful armlets and their armour and pennants were golden. Oppressed by Partha's arrows, many warriors died there. The armies were confounded in that encounter between Drona and Arjuna. Both of them brandished their bows, capable of withstanding great burdens. In that battle, they covered each other with arrows and bore the retaliation. A voice was heard from the sky, praising Drona. "Drona has performed an extremely difficult task of fighting with Arjuna, who is the destroyer of enemies, extremely valorous, firm in his hand and unassailable. The maharatha is the conqueror of all the gods, the daityas and the snakes." On beholding Partha's fixedness, learning, dexterity and great reach in battle, Drona was amazed. O bull among the Bharata lineage! In that battle, Partha raised the invincible and divine bow Gandiva and drew it with his arms. He released a shower of arrows, like a cloud of locusts. Even the wind was not capable of gliding through those arrows. There was not even an instant between Partha's shooting an arrow and the next one, no gap could be seen. In that extremely terrible battle of swiftly released weapons, Partha shot the arrows faster and faster. Then hundreds and thousands of straight-tufted arrows descended simultaneously on Drona's chariot. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The wielder of the Gandiva enveloped Drona with arrows and a great lamentation arose from the army. Maghavan[159] himself applauded Pandava's swiftness with weapons and so did the gandharvas and apsaras who had assembled there.

'Then the preceptor's son, leader of charioteers, suddenly encircled Pandava with a great number of chariots. Though Ashvatthama was greatly enraged with Partha, in his heart, the great-souled one applauded his deeds. Overcome by anger, he confronted Partha in that battle and showered him with arrows, like Parjanya[160] showering rain. The mighty-armed one turned his horses towards Drona's son and thus Partha gave Drona a chance to retreat. His armour and flag had been shattered with supreme arrows

and getting the opportunity, the brave one left on his swift horses.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'He[161] arrived with great speed, showering a great net of arrows, like clouds charged with rain. Partha countered him. There was a great battle, like that between the gods and the asuras. Like Vritra and Vasava, they covered each other with nets of arrows. The sun did not shine then. Nor did the wind blow. The sky was enveloped and shadowed by a net of arrows in every direction. O conqueror of enemy cities! There was a great sound of slapping, as the two warriors fought each other and tried to kill each other, like the sound of bamboos being burnt. Arjuna destroyed his horses and only a few were left alive. O king! They were so confused that they could not make out the directions. Partha was roaming around. Drona's immensely valorous son detected a subtle weakness and sliced off the string of his bow with an arrow that was as sharp as a razor. On witnessing this superhuman feat, the gods applauded. From a distance of eight bow-lengths, Drona's son, bull among men, again pierced Partha in the heart with an arrow that was shafted with feathers of herons. The mighty-armed Partha laughed out aloud and powerfully corded Gandiva with a new string. Partha drew it in the shape of a half-moon and countered him, like the mad leader of a herd of elephants against another crazy elephant. Those two warriors were unrivalled on earth. In the midst of that field of battle, an extremely great duel ensued, making the body hair stand up. On seeing those two great-souled and brave ones, like two leaders of herds engaged in combat, all the Kurus were astounded. Those two brave bulls among men struck each other with arrows that were like virulent poison and like flaming serpents. The great-souled Pandava possessed two divine and inexhaustible quivers. Therefore, the brave Partha stood on that field of battle, immobile as a mountain. But Ashvatthama's arrows were speedily discharged in that battle and were exhausted. Thus, Arjuna proved to be superior to him.

'Then Karna grasped an extremely large bow. He drew it in great anger and a great sound of lamentation arose. Partha looked in the direction where the bow had been drawn and seeing Radheya there, his anger increased. He was overcome by anger and wished to kill Karna. With dilated eyes, the bull among the Kurus glanced towards him. O king! He turned away from Drona's son, although the soldiers swiftly brought thousands of arrows to him. The mighty-armed Dhananjaya, conqueror of enemies, ignored Drona's son and suddenly rushed towards Karna. With eyes red in anger, Kounteya approached him, hoping for a duel in battle. He said …'

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'Arjuna said, "O Karna! You uttered many proud words in the midst of the assembly hall, to the effect that there was no one who was your equal in war. Disregarding all of

dharma, you spoke harsh words. But I think that your wish is impossible to accomplish. You ignored me and spoke words earlier. O Radheya! Now, with me and in the midst of these Kurus, make that true. You watched when evil-souled ones oppressed Panchali in the assembly hall. You will now reap the fruits of that. Being bound down by the noose of dharma, my rage was restrained earlier. O Radheya! You will now witness the victory of my anger in battle. O Karna! Now fight with me and let all the Kurus and their soldiers witness it."

'Karna replied, "O Partha! Carry out in deeds what you have spoken in words. It is known on earth that deeds are superior to words. What you suffered earlier was because your powers were insufficient. O Partha! I will accept it only if I witness your valour. If your rage was restrained earlier because you were bound down by the noose of dharma, you are tied down even now, though you consider yourself to be free. You say that you are conversant with dharma and artha. If you have dwelt in the forest in accordance with the promise, why do you wish to break that agreement now?[162] O Partha! If Shakra himself decides to fight on your behalf, I will not deviate from displaying my valour. O Kounteya! Your desire will soon be fulfilled. You will fight with me today and witness my strength."

'Arjuna said, "When fighting with me, you have earlier fled from the field of battle. O Radheya! That is the reason why you are still alive, though your younger brother has been killed. Which man other than you will see his brother dead, and then flee from the forefront of battle? Then you speak like this in the midst of truthful ones."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having thus spoken to Karna, the unvanquised Bibhatsu attacked him and released arrows that could penetrate body armour. Karna countered with arrows that were like the crests of flames and rained down a great shower of arrows, like monsoon clouds. The terrible net of arrows covered every direction. They separately pierced his[163] horses, arms and guards on his hands. Unable to tolerate this, he sliced off the strap of Karna's quiver with a straight-tufted arrow, sharp at the tip. Grasping other arrows from his quiver, Karna pierced Pandava on the hand, so that his grip weakened. The mighty-armed Arjuna then sliced off Karna's bow. He[164] hurled a javelin at him, but Partha cut that down with arrows. Then Radheya's large infantry attacked. But they were sent to Yama's abode with arrows released from Gandiva. Bibhatsu then stretched his bow up to his ears and killed his horses with sharp arrows that could take a great weight. They fell down dead on the ground. The mighty-armed and valorous Kounteya took up another flaming arrow and pierced Karna in the chest. The arrow pierced his armour and penetrated his body. He was immersed in darkness and lost consciousness for some time. Suffering great pain, he left the field of battle in a northern direction. Arjuna and maharatha Uttara started to censure him.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Having defeated Vaikartana, Partha told Virata's son, "Take me to the army where there is a golden palm.[165] Our grandfather, Shantanu's son Bhishma, is stationed on a chariot there. He looks like an immortal and is stationed there, wishing to fight with me. I will cut down the string of his bow in a battle. You will witness today a colourful and divine weapon unleashed by me. It will streak like lightning in the midst of a storm in the sky. The Kurus will witness my Gandiva, with a golden back. All the assembled enemies will debate among themselves, 'Is he shooting with the right hand or the left?'[166] I will make an impassable river flow, with waves of blood, eddies of chariots and elephants as crocodiles. It will flow towards the next world. This forest of Kurus has hands, feet, heads, backs and arms as branches. I will cut it down with straight-tufted arrows. The Kourava soldiers will be vanquished by my bow alone. Like a fire in the forest, I will create a hundred paths. Pierced by me alone, you will see the soldiers twirling on a wheel. Stand firmly on the chariot, over plain and uneven ground. I will pierce with my arrows the mountain that rises up into the sky. Earlier, on Indra's instructions, I killed thousands and hundreds of Poulamas and Kalakhanjas in battle.[167] I have obtained my firm grip from Indra and my dexterity of hand from Brahma. I have learnt from Prajapati deep, terrible and wonderful techniques.[168] I destroyed Hiranyapura on the other side of the ocean, after vanquishing sixty thousand charioteers who wielded terrible bows.[169] The forest of the Kurus has the banners as the trees, the soldiers as the grass and the chariots as groups of lions. I will consume it with the energy of my weapons. With my straight-tufted arrows, I will draw them out from the nests of their chariots, like the wielder of the vajra destroyed the asuras alone. I obtained the Roudra weapon from Rudra, Varuna[170] from Varuna, the Agneya weapon from Agni, Vayavya from Matarishvan[171] and the vajra and other weapons from Shakra. The terrible sons of Dhritarashtra are protected by lions among men. But I will uproot them. O son of Virata! Remove all your fears." Thus assured by Savyasachi, Virata's son penetrated the intelligent Bhishma's terrible army of chariots.

'The mighty-armed Dhananjaya advanced to conquer his enemies, but the one who was terrible in his deeds[172] countered this fearful advance. Four immensely strong ones advanced towards the one with the terrible bow—Duhshasana, Vikarna, Duhsaha and Vivimshati. They were skilled and spirited and adorned with colourful garlands and ornaments. They advanced and countered Bibhatsu, the wielder of the terrible bow. Duhshasana pierced Virata's son Uttara with an arrow. With a second one, the brave one pierced Arjuna on the chest. Jishnu[173] circled. With an arrow that was shafted with the feathers of vultures and had a broad tip, he sliced off his[174] bow that was decorated with polished gold. He then pierced him in the breast with five arrows. Oppressed by Partha's arrows, he fled from the field of battle. With arrows that were sharp, straight and shafted with the feathers of vultures, Dhritarashtra's son Vikarna then pierced Arjuna, the slayer of enemy warriors. But Kounteya immediately pierced him with

straight-tufted arrows on his forehead and thus wounded, he fell down from the chariot. Then, seeking to rescue their brother in battle, Duhsaha, together with Vivimshati, rushed towards Partha and enveloped him with sharp arrows. But the alert Dhananjaya struck both of them at the same time with sharp arrows that were shafted with the feathers of vultures and killed their horses. With their horses slain and their limbs pierced, the two sons of Dhritarashtra were borne away by their followers, who arrived on other chariots. Thus the unvanquished Bibhatsu, the diademed and immensely strong Kounteya, accomplished in striking the target, covered all the directions.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! All the maharatha Kouravas now got together and counter-attacked Arjuna with determination. But the one whose soul cannot be measured covered the maharathas everywhere with showers of arrows, like mountains shrouded with fog. The giant elephants trumpeted. The horses neighed. The kettledrums and conch shells resounded. A terrible tumult arose. Piercing the bodies of men and horses, slicing through iron armour, Partha's shower of arrows struck in thousands. Partha swiftly strode and shot arrows in that battle, ablaze like the resplendent autumn sun at midday. Struck by terror, the charioteers leapt down from their chariots and the cavalry from their horses. The infantry began to flee on the ground. When the great-souled one's arrows pierced the armour, made of copper, silver and iron, there was a mighty roar. The entire battlefield was strewn with bodies of those who had lost their senses, and with elephants, horses and other animals which had been robbed of their lives by the sharp arrows. The earth was covered with the corpses of those who had fallen down from their stations on the chariots. Dhananjaya seemed to be dancing in that battle, with a bow in his hand. On hearing Gandiva's twang, like the roar of the thunder, all the beings were frightened and fled from the great field of battle. The fallen heads could be seen in the forefront of that battle, with earrings and headdresses embellished with gold. The earth was strewn with bodies that had been destroyed by the arrows, with the arms holding bows and the hands decorated with ornaments. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Because the heads were struck down with sharp arrows, it seemed as if a shower of rocks had fallen down from the sky. Having displayed his terrible self, Partha, whose valour was terrible, roamed around, after having been restrained for thirteen years. The brave Pandava unleashed the anger of his wrath on the sons of Dhritarashtra. On witnessing his valour as he burnt down the soldiers, all the warriors sought peace, while Dhritarashtra's son[175] looked on. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Having terrified the soldiers and routed the maharathas, Arjuna, foremost among victorious ones, roamed around. He made a terrible river flow. Its current was made out of blood. The moss was made out of bones. It was as if destiny had fashioned it at the end of an era.[176] There was a terrible flow of

bows and arrows. The mud was made out of flesh and blood. The great chariots were like giant islands. There was the roar of conch shells and drums. Thus Partha created a giant river of blood that was difficult to cross. No one could make out when he affixed his arrows and released them, or when he drew the Gandiva, because no gap could be discerned.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Then Duryodhana, Karna, Duhshasana, Vivimshati, Drona and his son, and Kripa who was an atiratha in battle, returned angrily to the battle again, wishing to cause violence to Dhananjaya. They drew their sturdy and powerful bows. O great king! The one with the monkey on his banner[177] went forward to meet them on a chariot that was as radiant as the sun, with his flag unfurled. Kripa, Karna and Drona, supreme among charioteers, immensely valorous and with great weapons, sought to repulse Dhananjaya. They released a flood of arrows, like rain from monsoon clouds. A shower of arrows descended on Kiriti. They stationed themselves nearby and with great determination in that field of battle, swiftly showered him with many arrows that possessed feathered shafts. Having been thus covered from every direction with divine weapons, not even a space of two fingers could be seen on him. But maharatha Bibhatsu laughed and fixed his divine Aindra[178] weapon on Gandiva. It was as radiant as the sun. In that battle, the diademed and powerful Kounteya covered all the Kurus with arrows that burnt like the rays of the sun. Gandiva was like lightning in the clouds, like fire in the mountains and as long as Indra's weapon.[179] It was like Parjanya's showers and like lightning in the sky. Like a bird, Gandiva enveloped the ten directions. All the charioteers were completely terrified and sought peace. They were bereft of their senses. Losing their consciousness, all the warriors lost heart in the battle. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Thus, all the soldiers were shattered and fled in all the directions. They lost hope that they would remain alive.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Then Shantanu's son Bhishma, powerful and invincible, advanced towards Dhananjaya, while all the warriors were being killed in battle. He took up the best of bows, decorated with gold, and arrows that were sharp at the tip, capable of piercing the vitals of the heart. A white umbrella was held aloft his head. The tiger among men was as radiant as a mountain at the time of sunrise. Ganga's son[180] blew on his conch shell and delighted the sons of Dhritarashtra. He circled[181] and prepared to battle Bibhatsu. On seeing him advance, Kounteya, the destroyer of enemies, received him gladly, like a mountain receives a cloud full of rain.

'The brave Bhishma shot eight arrows at Partha's banner. They were extremely swift and hissed like serpents. Those blazing and feathered arrows struck the banner of

Pandu's son and struck the monkey and other beings that were stationed on the top of the standard. With an arrow that was sharp and broad, Pandava sliced off Bhishma's umbrella and it fell down on the ground. With firm and swift arrows, Kounteya struck his banner, the horses yoked to his chariot and the two charioteers who guarded his flanks. Then a terrible battle began between Bhisma and Pandava, like that between Bali and Vasava,[182] and it made the body hair stand up. When Bhisma and Pandava fought each other in that battle, arrows countered arrows in the sky and seemed like fireflies during the rains. O king! As Partha shot arrows with his left hand and his right, Gandiva looked like an unbroken circle of fire. He enveloped Bhishma with hundreds of sharp arrows, like a rain cloud covering a mountain with a shower of rain. With his own arrows, Bhishma repulsed Arjuna and countered that shower of arrows, like a shoreline beating back waves. In that battle, the shower of arrows was splintered and fell down around Phalguna's chariot. A shower of arrows with golden shafts then arose from Pandava's chariot, like a swarm of locusts. But yet again, Bhishma cut them down with hundreds of sharp arrows. All the Kurus applauded. "Wonderful! Bhishma has accomplished a difficult task in fighting with Arjuna. Pandava is powerful, young, skilled and swift. Truly, who other than Shantanu's son Bhishma, Devaki's son Krishna, or the immensely strong preceptor who is Bharadvaja's son, is capable of withstanding Partha's force in battle?" Using weapons to counter weapons, those bulls among men seemed to be playing. Those immensely strong ones confounded the sights of all beings. Those great-souled ones roamed on that field of battle, using Prajapatya, Aindreya, the extremely terrible Agneya, Koubera, Varuna, Yamya and Vayavya weapons.[183] All the beings who witnessed the battle were astounded. They said, "O mighty-armed Partha! Wonderful! O Bhishma! Wonderful! It is not for men to witness this great battle with mighty weapons between Bhishma and Partha." Thus the battle between those two, who were skilled in the use of all weapons, went on. Then Jishnu fixed a broad and sharp arrow to his bow and sliced down Bhishma's bow, which was decorated with gold. In an instant, the mighty-armed and immensely strong Bhishma grasped another bow in the field of battle, strung it, and angrily released many arrows at Dhananjaya. But Arjuna shot many sharp and colourful arrows at Bhishma and the immensely energetic Bhishma shot many at Pandava. They were both skilled in the use of divine weapons and incessantly shot arrows at each other. O king! Neither of the great-souled ones could be seen to be superior. The diademed Kounteya and Shantanu's brave son, both atirathas, covered the ten directions with their arrows. At times, Pandava surpassed Bhishma. At other times, Bhishma surpassed Pandava. O king! That battle was extraordinary in this world.

'Pandava killed the brave warriors who guarded Bhishma's chariot. O king! Killed by Kounteya, they were piled up in front of the chariot. Shvetavahana's[184] feathered shafts seemed to have wings. They leapt up when released from Gandiva, wishing to destroy

the enemy. They leapt up from his chariot, white and adorned in gold, like a flock of geese seen in the sky. He released his deep and divine weapons and it was marvellous. All the gods, together with Vasava, assembled in the sky to witness this. On witnessing this extraordinary sight, the powerful gandharva Chitrasena was extremely delighted and told the king of the gods these words of praise. "Look at the way these arrows, the destroyers of enemies, travel. As Jishnu releases his divine weapons, they are linked in a chain. Men will not believe this, because they[185] do not exist among them. There has been a wonderful collection of these ancient and great weapons. The soldiers are incapable of looking at Pandava. He dazzles like the midday sun in the sky. They are both famous in their deeds. They are skilled in battle. They are equal in their exploits. They are extremely difficult to vanquish in battle." O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On hearing these words, the king of the gods honoured the duel between Partha and Bhishma with a divine shower of flowers. Having perceived a weakness, Shantanu's son Bhishma attacked Savyasachi from the left side. But Bibhatsu laughed out aloud. With a broad and sharp arrow, shafted with the feathers of vultures, he sliced down the infinitely energetic Bhishma's bow. With ten arrows, Kunti's son, Dhananjaya, pierced the brave and careful one on his chest. Thus oppressed, Ganga's mighty-armed son, invincible in battle, clung to the pole of the chariot and stood there for a long time. On seeing that he had lost his senses, the charioteer remembered his instructions, and controlling the horses that were yoked to the chariot, drove away, so as to protect the maharatha.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'When Bhishma had left the forefront of that battle and had run away, Dhritarashtra's great-souled son raised up his standard and himself advanced towards Arjuna. Dhananjaya, extremely valorous and wielder of the terrible bow, was roaming around in the midst of the enemy hordes. He drew his bow up to his ears and with an arrow pierced him in the middle of his forehead.[186] The arrow's tip was extremely sharp and golden. O king! Struck by it, the performer of great deeds looked as beautiful as a mountain with a single peak. Pierced by the arrow, warm blood gushed out of the wound. The golden arrow was as beautiful as a flowery garland. Struck by the arrow, he was angered and rushed at Duryodhana in wrath. He took out arrows that were like poison and fire and spiritedly pierced the king.[187] Duryodhana was extremely energetic and attacked Partha and the brave one[188] attacked Duryodhana alone. Those two brave ones among men fought each other. They were both equal and were born in the lineage of Ajamidha.[189] Vikarna also rode on a gigantic and rutting elephant that was as large as a mountain and with four chariots protecting the elephant's legs, attacked Kunti's son, Jishnu. That Indra among elephants swiftly bore down on him. Dhananjaya grasped an extremely swift iron arrow. Drawing his bow up to his ears, he

pierced it between its temples. The arrow released by Partha was shafted with the feathers of vultures. It penetrated the elephant, right up to the feathers. Like the vajra released by Indra shatters a mountain, it shattered the one that was like a mountain.[190] The king of elephants was tormented by that arrow. Its limbs began to tremble and its soul was distressed. It slowly fell down on the ground, like the peak of a mountain that has been struck by a thunderbolt. When the supreme of tusked ones fell down on the ground, Vikarna was terrified and dismounted swiftly. He fled for a full eight hundred paces and climbed onto Vivimshati's chariot. Having slain the elephant with the arrow, like the vajra strikes down a mountain or a cloud, Partha used a similar arrow to pierce Duryodhana on the chest. The elephant and the king having both been pierced, Vikarna having been routed with the infantry that guarded him, the foremost among warriors were frightened of the arrows released from Gandiva, and swiftly fled.

'Having seen that the elephant had been killed with an arrow and that all the warriors had run away, the foremost among Kurus[191] retreated on his chariot from the field of battle and went to a spot where Partha was not present. But Kiriti was still eager to do battle. The destroyer of enemies addressed Duryodhana, who had been pierced by the arrow and was vomiting blood, and was swiftly trying to run away in terrible fright. Arjuna said, "Renounce your deeds and great fame. Why are you running away in this way and refraining from battle? Why aren't trumpets being sounded for you now, the way they were sounded when you set out to do battle? I obediently follow Yudhishthira's instructions. I am the third of the Parthas[192] and I am steadfast in battle. Therefore, turn around and show me your face. O son of Dhritarashtra! Remember how Indras among men[193] are supposed to act. You have been named Duryodhana earlier, but that name will be uttered on earth in vain.[194] There is no Duryodhana left in you. You are running away and refraining from battle. I do not see anyone to protect Duryodhana, either at the front or at the back. O foremost among Kurus! Therefore, run away from the battle. Protect your beloved life from the Pandava."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Dhritarashtra's great-souled son was thus summoned to do battle. He was brought back by that goad of words, like a mad elephant with a goad. The maharatha became intolerant because of the insulting words spoken by the spirited atiratha.[195] Like a serpent that has been stepped on with the sole of the foot, the brave one turned his chariot back. Karna saw that he was turning around. He also returned and tended to his[196] wounded limbs. He advanced towards Duryodhana's right flank and got ready to fight with Partha, the brave one among men, who was adorned in a golden garland. Shantanu's son Bhishma also returned. He swiftly prodded his horses with golden harnesses and protected Duryodhana from the rear from Partha, the mighty-armed one who wielded a bow. Drona, Kripa, Vivimshati and Duhshasana also swiftly

returned. All of them swiftly arrived with bows and arrows to protect Duryodhana. Partha saw those armies return, like heavy clouds. Like a swan advancing towards a descending cloud, the spirited Dhananjaya advanced towards them. They grasped divine weapons and surrounded Partha from every direction. They showered down arrows on him, like clouds showering rain on the summit of a mountain. The wielder of the Gandiva used weapons to counter the weapons of the bulls among the Kurus. The destroyer of enemies then made the weapon named sammohana[197] appear. This was impossible to counter. He covered all the directions and all the smaller directions with sharp arrows that had fine tips and fine shafts. With the roar of the Gandiva, the immensely strong one struck terror in their minds. He then grasped the giant conch shell in both his hands, one that had a deep and trembling sound. Partha, the destroyer of enemies, used this to make the sound echo in the directions, the smaller directions, the sky and the earth. At the roar of the conch shell blown by Partha, the foremost among the Kurus fell down unconscious. They gave up their invincible bows and all of them resorted to peace.[198]

'When they had lost consciousness, Partha remembered Uttara's[199] words. He told Matsya's son, "Go from the centre to where the Kurus are lying unconscious. Bring the preceptor's and Sharadvat's son's[200] extremely white garments and Karna's beautiful one. Those of Drona's son and the king[201] are blue. O brave one among men! Go and fetch those garments. I think that Bhishma knows how to counter the weapon and is still in his senses. Therefore, when you approach those who have not lost their senses, you should leave his vehicles to the left."[202] Virata's great-souled son handed over the reins and jumped down from the chariot. He gathered the garments of the maharathas and again swiftly ascended his own chariot. Virata's son then drove those four well-trained horses with golden harnesses. Bearing Arjuna, the white steeds passed through the midst of the army and its standards. When that foremost among men passed through, the spirited Bhishma shot arrows at him. But he killed Bhishma's horses and struck him in the side with ten arrows. Having killed his charioteer, Arjuna, the wielder of the invincible bow, left Bhishma on the field of battle. He emerged from the midst of that mass of chariots, like the one with the thousand rays shatters Rahu.[203]

'Dhritarashtra's son, foremost among the Kurus, regained his consciousness soon and beheld Partha, the equal of the great Indra. He saw him stationed alone, away from the field of battle. He quickly asked,[204] "How did he escape from you? Oppress him, so that he cannot escape." Shantanu's son laughingly replied, "Where did your intelligence disappear? Where was your valour? You had given up your colourful bow and your arrows. You were immersed in complete peace then. Bibhatsu is incapable of cruel deeds. His mind is never immersed in sin. He will not give up his own dharma even for the sake of the three worlds.[205] That is the reason all of us have not been killed in this battle. O foremost among the Kurus! Return swiftly to the Kuru kingdom. Let Partha

return with the cattle he has conquered." On hearing these words of the grandfather, which were meant for his welfare, Duryodhana gave up all desire to fight. The intolerant king sighed deeply, but kept silent. All the others saw the wisdom in Bhishma's words and knew the increasing fire within Dhananjaya. They therefore made up their minds to return and carefully protected Duryodhana.

'On seeing the foremost among the Kurus leave, Partha Dhananjaya was delighted in his mind. The great-souled one followed them for an instant, so as to honour his superiors. He bowed down, with his head on the ground, before the aged grandfather, Shantanu's son and the preceptor Drona. He used colourful arrows to show homage to Drona's son, Kripa and all his superiors. Partha then used an arrow to slice off Duryodhana's jewelled crown from his head. Having greeted the brave ones who deserved to be honoured, he filled the world with the roar of Gandiva. The brave one suddenly sounded Devadatta[206] and shattered the minds of his enemies. Having vanquished all his enemies, his pennant, garlanded with gold, was radiant. On seeing the Kurus leave, Kiriti happily told the son of Matsya, "The animals have been won. Make the horses return. The enemies have left. Let us return happily to the city."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Having defeated the Kurus in battle, the one with the eyes of a bull[207] gathered and brought back Virata's great riches. When the sons of Dhritarashtra had all been shattered and had left, many Kuru soldiers emerged from the dense woods. Their hearts trembled in fright and they appeared, here and there. They could be seen standing there, their hair dishevelled and with their hands joined in salutation. They were hungry and thirsty and exhausted and in an alien land, they were not in their senses. They bowed down in homage before Partha and asked, "What will we do?" Arjuna replied, "O fortunate ones! Be safe. There is no reason for you to be scared. I assure you that I have no desire to kill those who are miserable." On hearing these words of assurance, the assembled warriors praised him and wished for a long life, deeds and fame for him. Shattered and vanquished, the Kurus returned.

'On the road back, Phalguna spoke these words. "O brave prince! O mighty-armed one! Wait until all the cattle and all the cowherds have been collected. We will return to the city of Virata in the afternoon, after the horses have rested, have had their drink and have been tended to. The cowherds should now be swiftly dispatched by you. Let them go to the city with the good news that announces your victory."[208] Uttara quickly told the messengers, "On Arjuna's instructions, go and proclaim my victory."'

Section Forty-Eight

Vaivahika Parva

This section has 179 shlokas and five chapters.

Chapter 659(63): 54 shlokas
Chapter 660(64): 37 shlokas
Chapter 661(65): 21 shlokas
Chapter 662(66): 29 shlokas
Chapter 663(67): 38 shlokas

Vivaha *means wedding. After defeating the Kurus and winning back the cattle, Arjuna and Uttara return. The Pandavas reveal themselves. Arjuna and Subhadra's son, Abhimanyu, is married to Virata's daughter, Uttara.*

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Vaishampayana said, 'Leading an army, Virata had also won back his riches. With the other four Pandavas, he cheerfully entered the city. After defeating the Trigartas in battle and winning back all the cows, the great king, together with the Parthas, was radiant, surrounded by his prosperity. The brave one increased the delight of his well-wishers. He seated himself on his throne and all the ordinary subjects, together with the brahmanas, showed him homage. The king of Matsya, together with his army, honoured them in return. Then he gave the brahmanas, and the ordinary subjects, permission to leave. King Virata of Matsya, the leader of an army, then asked about Uttara. "Where has he gone?" All the women and maidens who dwelt in the inner quarters of the palace happily replied, "The Kurus abducted the wealth of cattle. Prithivinjaya was angry. He rashly went out alone, together with Brihannada, to defeat the six atiratha charioteers who had attacked us—Drona, Shantanu's son, Kripa, Karna, Duryodhana and Drona's son." On hearing that his son, eager to fight, had gone out alone on a chariot, with Brihannada as his charioteer, King Virata was tormented by grief and told his chief advisers, "Hearing that the Trigartas have been routed, all the Kurus and the lords of the earth will certainly not remain unmoved. Therefore, let those of my warriors, who have not been injured by the Trigartas, go out with a large army to protect Uttara." For the sake of his son, he swiftly instructed horses, elephants, chariots and a large number of brave infantry to advance, with many weapons and decorated with ornaments. King Virata of Matsya, the leader of an army, quickly instructed the army that consisted of four parts,[1] "Swiftly find out whether the prince is dead or alive. With a eunuch as his charioteer, I think that he cannot be alive." Dharmaraja then laughed and told Virata, oppressed and tormented by the Kurus, "O Indra among men! If Brihannada is his

charioteer, no enemy will now be able to take away the cattle. Served well by that charioteer, your son is capable of defeating in battle all the lords of the earth, together with the Kurus, even the gods, the asuras, the yakshas and the serpents." Meanwhile, the swift messengers dispatched by Uttara arrived in the city of Virata and announced the news of his victory.

'The chief adviser described everything to the king—the supreme victory, the defeat of the Kurus and Uttara's return. "All the cattle have been won back. The Kurus have been defeated. Uttara, the scorcher of enemies, is safe, together with his charioteer." Kanka[2] said, "It is through good fortune that the cattle have been recovered and the Kurus defeated. O bull among kings! It is through good fortune that we have heard that your son is alive. It is certain that one, who has Brihannada as his charioteer, will triumph." On hearing about the victory of his infinitely energetic son, King Virata was extremely delighted and his body hair stood up. He rewarded the messengers with garments and instructed his ministers, "Let the royal roads be decorated with flags. Let all the gods be honoured with offerings of flowers. Let princes, foremost warriors, well-ornamented harlots and all the musicians go out to receive my son. Let a man with a bell quickly mount an intoxicated elephant. Let him go to the crossroads and proclaim my victory. Let Uttara[3] go to receive Brihannada, surrounded by many maidens who bear the garments and ornaments of love."[4] On hearing the words of the lord of the earth, everyone held auspicious marks[5] in the hands and bore cymbals, trumpets and conch shells. There were beautiful women in gorgeous garments. There were bards and raconteurs. There were trumpets and other pleasant-sounding musical instruments. They emerged from immensely strong Virata's city, to receive his infinitely valorous son.

'After the soldiers, the maidens and the ornamented harlots had left, the immensely wise king of Matsya happily said, "O sairandhri![6] Fetch the dice. O Kanka! Let the gambling commence." When he said this, Pandava[7] looked at him and replied, "We have heard it said that one should not play with a gambler who is rejoicing. Now that you are so delighted, I should not play with you. I always act so as to bring you pleasure. But if you so wish, let it commence." Virata said, "Even if I do not gamble, today, you will not be able to save my women, my cattle, my gold and whatever other riches I possess."[8] Kanka replied, "O Indra among kings! Why do you wish to gamble? O one who grants honours! There are many vices and many sins in gambling and it should be avoided. You may have heard of, or seen, Pandava Yudhishthira. He lost his extremely large and prosperous kingdoms and his brothers, who were the equals of the thirty gods. He lost everything through gambling. Therefore, I find no pleasure in gambling. O king! But if it pleases you to gamble, we will play." While the gambling was going on, Matsya told Pandava, "Behold! My son has vanquished the likes of the Kurus in battle." At this, Dharma's son, Yudhishthira, replied to the king of Matsya, "How can one who has Brihannada as a charioteer not be victorious?" At this, the king of Matsya was enraged

and told Pandava, "O brahmana! You are praising a eunuch, as if he is equal to my son. Do you not know what should be said and what should not be said? You are insulting me. Why should he not defeat all the warriors, with Bhishma and Drona at the forefront? O brahmana! For the sake of our friendship, I will pardon you this affront. But if you wish to live, you must not speak in this fashion again." Yudhishthira said, "O Indra among kings! If Drona and Bhishma are there, Drona's son, Vaikartana and Kripa, and Duryodhana and many other maharathas, even if Shatakratu is himself there, surrounded by masses of Maruts, who other than Brihannada can fight all of them together?" Virata replied, "I have restrained you in many ways. But you do not control your words. If there is no one to restrain, who will observe dharma?" Having said this, the enraged king struck Yudhishthira on the face with the dice and angrily censured him. So powerfully was he struck that blood began to flow from his nose. Partha caught it in his hands before it fell down on the ground. The one with dharma in his soul glanced at Droupadi, who was standing at one side. Having got to know his intentions, and obedient to the wishes of her husband, the unblemished one filled a golden vessel with water. She used this to gather the blood that flowed from Pandava.

'Thereafter Uttara, adorned with pure fragrances and many garlands, happily and slowly entered the city. He was welcomed by the citizens, the women and the residents of the countryside. He approached the gate of the palace and sent word to his father. The gatekeeper entered and told Virata, "Your son Uttara is standing at the gate, together with Brihannada." Delighted, the king of Matsya told his *kshatta*,[9] "Bring both of them here immediately. I am anxious to see them." But the king of the Kurus[10] swiftly whispered in the kshatta's ears, "Let Uttara enter alone. Do not allow Brihannada to enter. The mighty-armed one has sworn an oath. If anyone wounds my limbs, or if anyone makes blood flow from my body without it being in an act of battle, he will certainly not remain alive. If he sees this blood flowing from my body, he will become angry and will not tolerate it. He will kill Virata, together with his advisers, his army and his vehicles."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Prithivinjaya, the eldest son of the king, then entered. He showed obeisance at his father's feet and then saw Dharmaraja. He was seated alone on the floor at one end, distracted, and smeared with blood. Sairandhri[11] attended to him. Quickly, Uttara asked his father, "O king! Who has struck him? Who has perpetrated this evil act?" Virata replied, "I have struck this wretch and he deserves more than this. When I praised your bravery, he praised the eunuch." Uttara said, "O king! You have done that which should not have been done. Swiftly ask for his pardon. Otherwise, this brahmana's terrible poison will burn you down, right down to the roots." Having heard his son's words, Virata, the extender of the kingdom, sought the forgiveness of

Kounteya, who was like a fire hidden behind ashes. Pandava told the king, who was begging his pardon, "O king! I have already forgiven you. There is no anger left in me. O great king! If that blood from my nose had fallen down on the ground, there is no doubt that you would have been destroyed, together with your kingdom.[12] O king! I do not blame you for striking one who had committed no crime. O great king! One who is powerful is always prone to quickly perform terrible acts." When the bleeding had stopped, Brihannada entered. He saluted Virata and Kanka and remained standing.

'After seeking Kouravya's pardon, Matsya began to praise Uttara, who had returned from the field of battle, in Savyasachi's hearing. "O one who extends Kaikeyi's joy![13] I have truly obtained an heir in you. I do not have, nor will there be, sons who are your equal. O son! How was your encounter with Karna? He does not miss a step when he takes a thousand steps. O son! How was your encounter with Bhishma? There is no one equal to him in the world of men. He is as calm as the ocean and as unbearable as the fire of destruction. The brahmana[14] is the preceptor of the warriors among the Vrishnis[15] and the Pandavas. He is the preceptor of all the kshatriyas and is supreme among all wielders of arms. O son! How was your encounter with Drona? The brave son of the preceptor is supreme among those who have knowledge of all weapons. He is famous as Ashvatthama. How was your encounter with him? On seeing Kripa in battle, people are distressed, like traders whose goods have been lost. O son! How was your encounter with him? Prince Duryodhana has shattered mountains with his great arrows. O son! How was your encounter with him?"

'Uttara replied, "The cattle have not been won back by me. Nor have I vanquished the enemies. All those deeds have been accomplished by the son of a god. On seeing me run away in fear, that young son of a god restrained me. He is like the one with the vajra in his hand[16] and ascended my chariot. He has won back the cattle and he has vanquished the Kurus. O father! All these brave deeds are his. They have not been accomplished by me. He released arrows and repulsed Sharadvat's son,[17] Drona, Drona's valorous son, the son of the suta[18] and Bhishma. Like the leader of a herd of elephants, he shattered Duryodhana in the battle and told that immensely strong and frightened prince, 'I do not see any escape for you in Hastinapura. O son of a Kourava! Save your life through endeavour. O king! You will not be able to save your life by running away. Make up your mind to fight. If you win, you will enjoy the earth. And if you are killed, you will enjoy heaven.' That tiger among men then returned and discharged arrows that were like the vajra. Surrounded by his advisers, the king stood on his chariot, like a hissing serpent. On seeing this, my body hair stood up. O revered one! My thighs began to tremble. But he struck that army, which was like a mass of clouds, with his arrows. That young one was like a lion and repulsed that army of chariots. O king! He laughed and stripped the Kurus of their garments. Alone, that brave one surrounded the six charioteers, like an angry tiger amidst deer roaming in the forest."

‘Virata asked, “Where is that brave and mighty-armed one, the immensely famous son of a god? He is the one who has won back my riches, which had been conquered by the Kurus in battle. I wish to see that immensely strong one and show him homage. That son of a god has protected you and my cattle.”

‘Uttara said, “O father! The powerful son of a god disappeared. But I think that he will reappear tomorrow, or the day after.”’

Vaishampayana said, ‘While this was being described, Pandava[19] remained concealed in his disguise. Virata did not know that Partha Arjuna was residing there. Having obtained the great-souled Virata’s permission, Partha himself gave those garments to Virata’s daughter. They were extremely expensive and fine and the beautiful Uttara happily accepted those garments. O king! Kounteya then secretly devised a plan with Uttara,[20] about everything that should be done vis-à-vis Yudhishthira. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Together with Matsya’s son, the bull among men cheerfully carried this out.’

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Vaishampayana said, ‘On the third day, the five Pandava brothers bathed themselves and donned white garments, having completed the pledge that they had made.[21] Adorning themselves in ornaments, and with Yudhishthira at the forefront, the maharathas were as resplendent as elephants marked with the signs of the lotus.[22] They went to Virata’s assembly hall and seated themselves on thrones meant for lords of the earth. They were as radiant as fires on sacrificial altars. While they were seated there, Virata, lord of the earth, arrived at the assembly hall to perform all his royal duties. On seeing the handsome Pandavas, blazing like fires, with Kanka seated there in the form of a god, like the lord of the thirty gods attended by the Maruts, Matsya told him, “I put you in charge of the dice and appointed you the official gamester. Why are you ornamented and why are you seated on the royal throne?”

‘O king! On hearing Virata’s words, Arjuna laughed and spoke the following words. “O king! This one deserves to be seated on Indra’s throne. He has the qualities of a brahmana. He is learned in the sacred texts. He is generous. He is the performer of sacrifices. He is rigid in his vows. He is a bull among the Kurus. He is Kunti’s son, Yudhishthira. His deeds are established on this earth, like the rays of the rising sun. O king! When he dwelt in the land of the Kurus, ten thousand powerful elephants used to follow him at the back. Thirty thousand chariots and well-trained and handsome horses, with golden harnesses, always used to follow him from behind. There were eight hundred bards, with earrings studded with polished gems, together with minstrels chanting his praises, like rishis praising Shakra earlier. O king! Like the immortals wait on the lord of riches,[23] the Kurus, and all the kings, waited on him, like servants. O great king! All the lords of the earth offered him tribute then, like ordinary vaishyas.

The king was excellent in his vows and eighty-eight thousand great-souled *snatakas*[24] earned their living off him. O lord! In accordance with dharma, he protected his subjects like sons, the aged, the unprotected, the disabled and the crippled. Such was his dharma, his self-control over anger and his carefulness in observing vows. He was extremely generous. He had the qualities of a brahmana. The lord of the earth was always truthful. The lord Suyodhana was tormented because of his prosperity and his power, together with his followers, Karna, Soubala and the others. O lord of men! It is impossible to recount all his qualities. These are vested in the great king Pandava, bull among the lords of the earth. Does such a king not deserve a seat that is meant for a lord of the earth?"'

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'Virata said, "If this is King Kouravya Yudhishthira, the son of Kunti, where is his brother Arjuna? Where is the powerful Bhima? Where are Nakula, Sahadeva and the famous Droupadi? From the time they were defeated in the gambling match, no one has got to know about the Parthas."

'Arjuna replied, "O lord of men! This cook of yours, known by the name of Ballava, is the mighty-armed Bhima, whose speed and valour are terrible. To fetch divine sougandhika flowers for Krishna, it is he who killed the demons on Mount Gandhamadana.[25] He is the gandharva who slew the evil-souled Kichaka.[26] It was he who slew tigers, bears and boars in your women's quarters. The one who tends to your horses is Nakula, the scorcher of enemies. The one who looks after your cattle is Sahadeva, the other one of Madri's maharatha sons. These two bulls among men are capable of withstanding thousands of warriors and are handsome and famous. They now wear the garments and ornaments of love.[27] O king! This lotus-eyed, slender-waisted and sweet-smiling sairandhri is Droupadi. It is because of her that the Kichakas were killed. O great king! I am Arjuna and you have no doubt heard about me. I am Partha, the younger brother of Bhima and elder to the two twins. O great king! We have happily spent our period of concealment in your abode, like beings inside a womb."'

Vaishampayana said, 'When Arjuna had revealed the five brave Pandavas, Virata's son recounted Arjuna's valour. "This is the one who was like a lion among deer in the midst of the enemies. He ranged among the mass of charioteers and killed the best of them. With a single arrow, he pierced and killed a giant elephant in the battle. Adorned with a golden harness, it fell down, embedding its tusks on the ground. It is he who won back the cattle and defeated the Kurus in battle. It is the sound of his conch shell that deafened my ears." On hearing these words, the powerful king of Matsya, who had insulted Yudhishthira, told Uttara, "I think the time has come to seek the favour of the Pandavas. If you so think, I will bestow Uttara on Partha."[28] Uttara replied, "They deserve worship, homage and honour and I think that the time has come. Let the

immensely fortunate Pandavas, who are deserving of honour, be honoured." Virata said, "When I myself came under the power of enemies in the field of battle, it was Bhimasena who rescued me and won back the cattle.[29] It is through the valour of their arms that we have been victorious in battle. With all our advisers, let us seek the favours of Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, bull among the Pandavas, and his younger brothers. Let the fortunate lord among men forgive everything that we have said in ignorance. Pandava has dharma in his soul." Virata was extremely delighted and he made an alliance with the king. He offered the great-souled one his entire kingdom, together with the royal staff, the treasury and the capital.

'Then addressing all the Pandavas, with Dhananjaya at the forefront, the powerful king of the Matsyas repeatedly kept on saying that he was fortunate. He repeatedly embraced and inhaled the fragrance of the heads[30] of Yudhishthira, Bhima, Madri's two sons and Pandava.[31] Virata, lord of an army, was not satisfied from looking at them. He happily told King Yudhishthira, "It is through good fortune that all of you have returned safely from the forest. It is through good fortune that you have spent the period of concealment, undetected by those evil-souled ones.[32] I am offering this kingdom, and whatever else I possess, to the Parthas. May the Kounteyas accept everything, without any hesitation. Let Savyasachi Dhananjaya accept Uttara. That supreme among men is the right husband for her." Thus addressed, Dharmaraja glanced towards Partha Dhananjaya. When his brother looked at him, Arjuna spoke these words to Matsya. "O king! I will accept your daughter as my daughter-in-law. Such an alliance between supreme Matsyas and Bharatas will be proper."'

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'Virata asked, "O best of the Pandavas! Why do you refuse to accept my daughter as your wife? Accept her. I am offering her to you."

'Arjuna replied, 'Dwelling in your inner quarters, I always observed your daughter. Whether in private or in public, she always trusted me as her father. I was loved by her and respected because of my skills in dancing and singing. Your daughter has always thought of me as her teacher. O king! I lived for a year with a woman who is nubile. O lord! Suspicion on your part, or that of your subjects, is not misplaced. O lord of the earth! Therefore, I am asking for your daughter. I have been pure and have been in control of my senses. Because of my self-control, she has been kept pure. There is no difference between a daughter and a daughter-in-law, nor that between a son and one's own self. I do not see any misdemeanour in this and purity will be preserved. O scorcher of enemies! I am terrified of curses and false accusations. O king! That is the reason I will accept your daughter Uttara as my daughter-in-law. O lord of the earth! My mighty-armed son Abhimanyu is Vasudeva's nephew.[33] He is just like a child of the gods. He is learned in all weapons and is loved by the one who wields the *chakra*.[34] He is the right

son-in-law for you and a husband for your daughter."

'Virata said, "This is indeed appropriate for Kunti's son, Dhananjaya, the best of the Kurus. Pandava is learned and wise and always follows dharma. O Partha![35] What do you think should be done after this? If one has an alliance with Arjuna, all one's desires are completely satisfied."'

Vaishampayana said, 'When the Indra among kings said this, Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, gave his consent to the alliance between Matsya and Partha. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Virata, lord of the earth, and Kounteya[36] sent messengers to all their friends and Vasudeva. Thus, after the thirteen years were over, all the five Pandavas began to live in Virata's Upaplavya.[37] Bibhatsu Pandava went to bring Janardana, Abhimanyu and the other Dasharhas from the Anarta region.[38] O lord of the earth! The kings of Kashi and Shaibya, who were affectionate towards Yudhishthira, arrived with two *akshouhinis*.[39] The immensely strong and powerful Yajnasena[40] arrived with one akshouhini, and Droupadi's brave sons and the unvanquished Shikhandi. There was the invincible Dhrishtadyumna, supreme among those who wield all weapons. There were others with many akshouhinis, those who sacrificed with a lot of donations. All of them were learned in the use of weapons and all of them were brave and were ready to give up their lives.[41] Matsya, supreme among those who uphold dharma, was happy at seeing that they had come. He was happy that he had bestowed his daughter on Abhimanyu. After the lords of the earth had arrived from different directions, Vasudeva Vanamali arrived, and so did the wielder of the plough.[42] Hardikya Kritavarma, Yuyudhana Satyaki, Anadhrishti, Akrura, Samba and Nishatha arrived.[43] Those scorchers of enemies brought Abhimanyu and his mother with them. Indrasena[44] and the others arrived there, taking good care of the chariots, having remained away for one entire year. Ten thousand elephants arrived and one million horses. There were a full one hundred million chariots and one billion foot soldiers. There were many supremely energetic Vrishnis, Andhakas and Bhojas. They followed that tiger among the Vrishnis, the greatly resplendent Vasudeva. Krishna separately gave each of the great-souled Pandavas a collection of women, gems and garments.

'In accordance with the rites, the marriage between the Matsyas and the Parthas took place. Conch shells, kettle drums, trumpets and drums were assembled and played in Matysa's palace, honoured by the Parthas. Many hundreds of diverse deer and other animals were slain. Liquor and other celestial drinks were brought in large quantities. There were many skilled singers and raconteurs, dancers and minstrels. The assembled bards, together with the minstrels, began to chant praises. With Sudeshna leading the way, the supreme women from the Matsyas arrived. All of them were beautiful in their limbs and wore earrings that were studded with excellent gems. They were well complexioned, noble, beautiful and ornamented. But Krishna surpassed them in beauty, fame and prosperity. They surrounded the ornamented Princess Uttara and honoured

her, as if she was a daughter of the great Indra. Dhananjaya Kounteya accepted Virata's unblemished daughter for his and Subhadra's son. Kunti's son, the great king Yudhishthira, stood there, equal in beauty to Indra, and accepted her as his daughter-in-law. When Partha had accepted her and honoured Janardana, the wedding ceremony of Subhadra's great-souled son was performed. He gave him[45] seven thousand horses that possessed the speed of the wind, two hundred supreme elephants and a great deal of riches. Once the marriage was over, Dharma's son, Yudhishthira, gave the brahmanas the riches that Achyuta[46] had brought—thousands of cows, gems, diverse kinds of garments, excellent ornaments, vehicles and beds. There were great festivities. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The city of the king of Matsyas was resplendent and crowded with people who were happy and well fed.'

This ends Virata Parva.

Udyoga Parva

In the 18-parva classification of the Mahabharata, Udyoga Parva is fifth. The word *udyoga* means effort, exertion or perseverance. With the period of exile over, efforts are made to give the Pandavas a share in the kingdom and avoid the imminent war. This explains the naming of the parva. When this does not work, the parva ends with preparations for the inevitable war. Udyoga Parva has 197 chapters. In the 100-parva classification of the Mahabharata, Sections 49 through 60 constitute Udyoga Parva. In the numbering of the chapters in Udyoga Parva, the first number is a consecutive one, starting with the beginning of the Mahabharata. And the second number, within brackets, is the numbering of the chapter within the parva.

Section Forty-Nine

Udyoga Parva

This section is also known as Udyoga Parva. It has 575 shlokas and twenty-one chapters.

Chapter 664(1): 25 shlokas
Chapter 665(2): 13 shlokas
Chapter 666(3): 23 shlokas
Chapter 667(4): 27 shlokas
Chapter 668(5): 18 shlokas
Chapter 669(6): 18 shlokas
Chapter 670(7): 36 shlokas
Chapter 671(8): 37 shlokas
Chapter 672(9): 52 shlokas
Chapter 673(10): 47 shlokas
Chapter 674(11): 22 shlokas
Chapter 675(12): 32 shlokas
Chapter 676(13): 25 shlokas
Chapter 677(14): 15 shlokas
Chapter 678(15): 32 shlokas
Chapter 679(16): 34 shlokas
Chapter 680(17): 20 shlokas
Chapter 681(18): 25 shlokas
Chapter 682(19): 32 shlokas
Chapter 683(20): 21 shlokas
Chapter 684(21): 21 shlokas

There are consultations in Drupada's court about the next course of action. In preparation for war, the Kurus and the Pandavas send word to their allies. However, Drupada's priest is sent to the Kurus as a messenger. Duryodhana and Arjuna go to Krishna to seek his help. Arjuna opts for the unarmed Krishna, who will not take part in the fight and Duryodhana happily accepts Krishna's large army. Balarama says that he will remain neutral, while Kritavarma helps Duryodhana. Duryodhana persuades Shalya to switch to the Kourava side. However, Shalya promises Yudhishthira that he will distract Karna when Karna and Arjuna fight. Shalya tells the Pandavas the story of Trishira, Vritra, Indra and Nahusha. The Kouravas assemble eleven akshouhinis of soldiers, while the Pandavas assemble seven akshouhinis. Drupada's priest delivers the message. Dhritarashtra promises to reflect on this and send Sanjaya back as a messenger.

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Vaishampayana said, 'When the foremost among the Kurus had happily celebrated Abhimanyu's wedding with their respective parties, they safely rested for four nights. Then they went to Virata's assembly hall. The assembly hall of the king of the Matsyas was prosperous. It was marvellous, decorated with the best of gems and jewels. There were seats and fragrant garlands. Those aged among the lords of men arrived there. Virata and Drupada, the two Indras among men, seated themselves on the seats that were at the front. There was also the grandfather of Rama and Janardana, aged and revered by the lords of the earth.[1] The foremost among the Shinis, together with Rohini's

son, was seated near the king of Panchala.[2] Janardana and Yudhishthira were seated near the king of Matsya. All the sons of King Drupada were seated there, Bhima, Arjuna and Madri's two sons. There were Pradyumna and Samba, brave in battle, and Virata's son, together with Abhimanyu.[3] Droupadi's sons seated themselves, on beautiful seats that were decorated with gold. They were the equals of their fathers in bravery. The maharathas who were seated there dazzled in their colourful garments and brilliant jewels. With all the prosperous and assembled kings, it was as if the sky was covered with unblemished planets. As was proper, those brave ones among men conversed with each other on various subjects. Then they reflected for some time and all the kings looked in Krishna's direction. Having finished their conversation, those lions among kings who had been assembled by Madhava, looked towards him. They listened to his words, of deep meaning and great significance, about what should be done regarding the Pandavas.

'Krishna said, "It is known to all of you how Yudhishthira was defeated by Soubala[4] in a deceitful game of dice and lost his kingdom. He made an agreement that he would spend some time in exile. They are capable of swiftly conquering the earth. But they stuck to their pledge and conducted themselves in accordance with it. The sons of Pandu are foremost among the Bharatas. But they stuck to that terrible vow of six plus seven years. They spent the terrible thirteenth year near you, but were undetected. They bore many hardships. All of you know everything about that. With that over, think about what is best for the king who is Dharma's son and for Duryodhana. Think about what is best for the Kurus and the Pandavas, what is in accordance with dharma, is appropriate, and also ensures glory. Dharmaraja will not crave the kingdom of the gods, if that is not in accordance with dharma. He will instead desire the lordship of a village, if that is in accordance with dharma and artha. It is known to all the kings that he was robbed of his ancestral kingdom by Dhritarashtra's sons through falsehood. They[5] confronted great and unbearable difficulties. Dhritarashtra's sons did not vanquish the Parthas in battle, through their own energy. But even then the king,[6] together with his well-wishers, desires to see them healthy and happy. The sons of Kunti and the sons of Madri are heroes among men. They only wish to obtain what the sons of Pandu won for themselves, by conquering and subjugating the kings of the earth.[7] You know everything about how they[8] used different means to kill these destroyers of enemies, even when they were children. They seized their kingdom through unholy and terrible means. Witness their increasing avarice and Yudhishthira's devotion to dharma in his soul. Reflect on the relationship between them. Separately and collectively, decide on a course of action. They have always been devoted to the truth and have faithfully completed the period of the covenant. Therefore, if they are not treated fairly now, let them kill all the assembled sons of Dhritarashtra. On learning that the king[9] is oppressing them,[10] all their well-wishers will gather around them. Let them be brought

down in battle. Those who wish to fight will be slain. But if it is your view that they[11] are too feeble and too few to be able to defeat them, let all the well-wishers gather together and endeavour to destroy all of them.[12] Duryodhana's intentions are still not known now. Nor does one know what he plans to do. With the intentions of the enemy not being known, how can one decide on an appropriate course of action? Therefore, let someone who is devoted to dharma go there, a man who is controlled, pure and born of a noble lineage. Let the messenger try to persuade them that half of the kingdom should be returned to Yudhishthira."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O king! On hearing Janardana's sweet and calm words, full of dharma and artha, his elder brother[13] strongly welcomed and applauded those words and spoke these words of his own.'

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'Baladeva said, "You have heard Gada's elder brother.[14] These words are in conformity with dharma and artha. These will ensure welfare for Ajatashatru[15] and also ensure welfare for King Duryodhana. By giving up half of the kingdom, the brave sons of Kunti are striving to ensure that which is good. Dhritarashtra's son should also give up half of the kingdom and happily spend his time with us. Provided that the rivals act in a similar fashion, by obtaining the kingdom,[16] it is certain that the brave ones among men will be pacified and will find joy. Their pacification will also ensure the welfare of the subjects. I will be happy if someone goes there to ascertain Duryodhana's intentions and conveys to him Yudhishthira's words, so that welfare is ensured for the Kurus and the Pandavas. Let him meet Bhishma, foremost among the Kurus, Vichitravirya's noble son,[17] Drona and his son, Vidura, Kripa, the king of Gandhara[18] and the son of the suta,[19] and also the other sons of Dhritarashtra, who are foremost among strong ones and foremost among those who are learned. They are established in their own dharma. They are heroes in this world and they are aged in learning and in years. When all these elders and citizens have collected and assembled together, he must bow down and speak his words, so that the welfare of Kunti's son is ensured. Under no circumstances should they be angered. They have ensured their welfare by resorting to their strength. Yudhishthira was addicted to gambling and they approached him with affection. It was thus that he lost his kingdom. He was warned by all his well-wishers, the brave ones among the Kurus, because he was not skilled in gambling.[20] But Ajamidha[21] challenged the son of the king of Gandhara, who was skilled in gambling with the dice. There were thousands of other gamblers whom Yudhishthira could have defeated with the dice. But he ignored them and challenged Soubala, who defeated him with the dice. He was defeated by the one who gambled against him and the dice were always against him. Having commenced, he lost his head and was convincingly defeated. Therefore, there is no crime that attaches to Shakuni. Thus, let him show obeisance to Vichitravirya's son and

speak many words that are conciliatory. In this way, the man[22] may be able to persuade Dhritarashtra's son and bring him around to what is in our interest."'

Vaishampayana said, 'While the foremost among the Madhus[23] was thus speaking, the foremost among the Shinis[24] suddenly stood up. He censured his words and in great anger, spoke these words.'

666(3)

'Satyaki said, "The way a man speaks, reflects the nature of his soul. The form of your words reflects the nature of your soul. There are brave men and there are cowards. Both are firm distinctions and can be seen among men. A eunuch and an extremely powerful man may be born in the same lineage, just as one branch of a tree yields fruit and another one does not yield fruit. O one who bears the standard of a plough! I am not censuring the words that you have spoken. O Madhava! I am censuring the ones who are listening to your words. In the midst of this assembly, without any fear, how can one speak the slightest evil about Dharmaraja? Those who were skilled with dice challenged the great-souled one and defeated him. He was unskilled with dice and acted in accordance with faith. How can this be a victory in accordance with dharma? Had they come to the house of Kunti's son while he was playing with his brothers and defeated him there, that would have been a victory in accordance with dharma.[25] They challenged a king, who was always devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas. Then they defeated him through deceit.[26] Can there be anything more supremely sacred than that? Having observed the supreme covenant, why should he approach in obeisance? Having been freed from that exile in the forest, he has obtained his ancestral share. Even if Yudhishthira were to desire someone else's property, it is not proper that he should ask for someone else's property. Are they[27] acting in accordance with dharma, if they are not prepared to give up the kingdom? The Kounteyas have passed the prescribed period of concealment. Though Bhishma and the great-souled Drona have pleaded with them, they claim that they have been recognized.[28] They are not prepared to give the sons of Pandu their ancestral riches.

'"I will use the force of sharp arrows and persuade them on the field of battle. I will make them fall down at the feet of the great-souled Kounteya. If they refuse to bow in obeisance before the wise one, they, together with their advisers, will go to Yama's abode. They will not be able to withstand an angry Yuyudhana[29] who is eager to fight. Can the mountains withstand the force of a thunderbolt? Who can withstand the wielder of the Gandiva bow, the one who uses the chakra in battle,[30] me, or the unassailable Bhima? The twins wield firm bows and are extremely radiant, the equals of Yama. If one wishes to live, can one approach Parshata Dhrishtadyumna,[31] or the five Pandavas who have extended Droupadi's glory? When they are intoxicated with pride, is there anyone who is equal to the sons of Pandu in status or in valour? Soubhadra[32] is a great

archer and even the immortals find it difficult to withstand him. Gada, Pradyumna and Samba are the equals of destiny, the thunderbolt and the fire. After killing Dhritarashtra's son in battle, together with Shakuni and Karna, we will instate the Pandavas. There is no adharma attached to killing an enemy who is an assassin.[33] There is adharma and infamy in begging from enemies. Therefore, without any delay, let us satisfy the desires of his[34] heart. The Pandavas must obtain the kingdom that was given to them by Dhritarashtra. Let Pandu's son, Yudhishthira, obtain his kingdom today, or let them all be killed on the field of battle and go to sleep on the ground."'

667(4)

'Drupada said, "O mighty-armed one! There is no doubt that it will be this way. Duryodhana will not hand back the kingdom sweetly. Dhritarashtra loves his son and will follow him. So will Bhishma and Drona out of poverty, and Radheya and Soubala out of folly.[35] It is my view that Baladeva's words were not appropriate, because they apply to a man who wishes to act properly right from the beginning. Dhritarashtra's son should never be addressed through gentle words. I think that it is impossible to persuade that evil-minded one through gentleness. One exhibits gentleness towards a donkey and roughness towards a cow. Duryodhana, the one with evil intelligence, will not pay any heed to gentle words. I think that if gentle words are used, that evil one will take the speaker to be weak. If gentle words are used, that stupid one will think that he has triumphed. Let us do this. Let us make preparations here. Let us send word to our allies to collect forces for us. Let messengers who travel swiftly go to Shalya,[36] Dhrishtaketu,[37] the lord Jayatsena[38] and all the Kekayas. Duryodhana is certain to send messengers to all of them also. But those who are righteous and have been allied to us earlier, will accept the first request. Therefore, let us make haste and let us request those Indras among men first. It is my view that a great task is about to be undertaken.

'"Send word to Shalya quickly and to the kings who are under his suzerainty, and to King Bhagadatta, who dwells by the eastern ocean. And to Amitouja, Ugra, Hardikya, Ahuka, the extremely wise Malla and the lord Rochamana. Let Brihanta be brought and the King Senabindu, Papajit, Prativindhya, Chitravarma, Suvastuka, Bahlika, Munjakesha, the lord of Chedi, Suparsha, Subahu, the maharatha Pourava, the kings who rule over the Shakas, the Pahlavas and the Daradas, the Kambojas, the Rishikas, the western Anupakas, Jayatsena, the king of Kashi, the kings of the five rivers,[39] the unassailable son of Kratha, the kings of the mountainous regions, Janaki, Susharma, Maniman, Poutimatsyaka, the king of the land of Pamshu, the valorous Dhrishtaketu, Oudra, Dandadhara, the valorous Brihatsena, Aparajita, Nishada, Shreniman, Vasuman, the immensely energetic Brihadbala, Bahu the conqueror of enemy cities, King Samudrasena with his valorous son, Adari, Nadija, King Karnaveshta, Samartha, Suvira, Marjara, Kanyaka, Mahavira, Kadru, Nikara, the terrible Kratha, Nila, Viradharma, the

valorous Bhumipala, Durjaya, Dantavakra, Rukmi, Janamejaya, Ashadha, Vayuvega, King Purvapali, Bhuriteja, Devaka, Ekalavya's son, the kings of Karushaka, the valorous Kshemadhurti, Uddhava, Kshemaka, King Vatadhana, Shrutayu, Dridhayu, Shalva's valorous son and the lord of the Kalingas, Kumara, who is unassailable in battle. I think that it is desirable that word should be sent to them as quickly as is possible. O king! This brahmana is my priest. He should be swiftly sent to Dhritarashtra. Tell him the words that he should speak—how Duryodhana is to be addressed, and the king who is Shantanu's son, how Dhritarashtra is to be addressed, and Drona, supreme among learned ones."'

668(5)

'Vasudeva said, "These words are appropriate for the wise leader of the Somakas.[40] They will ensure welfare and success for the infinitely energetic King Pandava. If we wish to act in accordance with right policy, this should indeed be the first course of action. A man who acts contrary to this will be foolish. But our relationships with the Kurus and the Pandavas are equal, though at the moment we happen to be with the Pandavas. Like all of you, we have been brought here because of the wedding. With the marriage having been concluded, we will return happily to our houses. You are the oldest among the kings in age and learning.[41] There is no doubt that all of us are like your pupils. Dhritarashtra has always shown you a great deal of honour. You are a friend to the preceptors Drona and Kripa.[42] For the welfare of the Pandavas, you should be the one who should send word. It is certain that whatever message you send will be acceptable to all of us. If the bull among the Kurus seeks peace, as is proper, there will be no great loss to the fraternal feelings that exist between the Kurus and the Pandavas. If Dhritarashtra's son acts contrary to this, out of insolence and delusion, send word to the others[43] and then summon us. Then, having enraged the wielder of Gandiva, the stupid and evil-minded Duryodhana will confront his destiny, together with his advisers and his relatives."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having shown homage to Varshneya, Virata, lord of the earth, sent him home, together with his followers and his relatives. When Krishna had left for Dvaraka, with Yudhishthira at the forefront, all of them[44] made preparations for war, together with King Virata. Together with his relatives, Virata—and Drupada, lord of the earth—sent word to all the lords of the earth. On receiving word from the lions among the Kurus and Matsya and Panchala, all the extremely powerful lords of the earth gathered cheerfully. On learning that a great force was being gathered for the sons of Pandu, Dhritarashtra's son also assembled many lords of the earth. O king! The entire earth was thronged with lords of the earth who arrived for the sake of the Kurus and the Pandavas. The forces of those brave ones arrived from every direction. With her mountains and forests, the goddess earth seemed to tremble. With Yudhishthira's

approval, Panchala despatched his priest, who was old in wisdom and in years, to the Kurus.'

669(6)

'Drupada said, "Among all beings, beings who sustain life through intelligence are superior. Among those that have intelligence, men are superior; and among men, brahmanas. Among brahmanas, those who know the Vedas are superior; and among those who know the Vedas, those who have achieved understanding. It is my view that you are the foremost among those who have achieved understanding. You have been born in a distinguished lineage and possess age and learning. In wisdom, you are the equal of Shukra and Angirasa.[45] You know everything about the kind of conduct Kourava follows. You know the conduct of Kunti's son, Pandava Yudhishthira. The Pandavas were deceived by their enemies, with Dhritarashtra's knowledge. Though Vidura entreated him, he followed his son alone. It was on Shakuni's advice that Kunti's son had been challenged earlier. He was unskilled in dice and they were skilled in dice, but he was steadfast in the pure conduct of a kshatriya. Thus it was that Dharmaraja Yudhishthira was deceived. Under no circumstances will they return the kingdom of their own accord. But you should speak words full of dharma to Dhritarashtra. It is certain that you will then win the hearts of his soldiers. Vidura will also act in accordance with your words and bring about dissension in Bhishma, Drona and Kripa. With dissension among his advisers and reluctance among his warriors, he will then face a task in bringing them together again. Meanwhile, the intelligent Parthas will happily and single-mindedly devote their attention to military matters and to the collection of supplies. There will be dissension among the others and you will spend a long time there. There is no doubt that they will not be able to pay attention to military matters. I feel that this necessary task is your main purpose in being there. After meeting with you and listening to your words, Dhritarashtra may decide to act according to dharma. You are united with dharma and you will act in accordance with dharma. To those who are compassionate, recount the hardships confronted by the Pandavas. To the elders, speak about the dharma that has been observed in the lineage earlier. I have no doubt that you will be able to estrange their minds. You have nothing to fear from them. You are a brahmana who has knowledge of the Vedas. You are being sent on a task as a messenger. And specifically, you are old. To bring success to the objective of the Kounteyas, leave swiftly for the Kouravyas, when there is a conjunction of Pushya and at the muhurta of Jaya."'[46]

Vaishampayana said, 'Having been instructed in this way by the great-souled Drupada, the priest, whose conduct was excellent, departed for the city of Nagasahrya.'[47]

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Vaishampayana said, 'After Krishna and Baladeva Madhava had left for Dvaravati, with hundreds of Vrishnis, Andhakas and all the Bhojas, the king who was Dhritarashtra's son, secretly employed messengers and spies and got to know everything that the Pandavas were attempting. Having heard that Madhava[48] had left, he himself set out for the city of Dvaraka.[49] He took a force with him that was not too large, and superb horses that were equal to the wind. On that very day, Kounteya Dhananjaya, the son of Pandu, went to the beautiful city of the Anarta.[50] Those two tigers among men, descendants of the Kuru lineage, arrived in Dvaraka. They went to Krishna and saw that he was supine and asleep. When Govinda was asleep, Suyodhana entered. He seated himself on a supreme seat that was towards Krishna's head. Then the great-souled Kiriti entered. With his hands joined in salutation, he stood towards Krishna's feet. On waking up, Varshneya saw Kiriti first. He welcomed both of them with the appropriate honours. Madhusudana asked them the reason for their arrival. Then Duryodhana smiled and told Krishna, "You should come to my aid in this battle. Your friendship with me and Arjuna is equal. O Madhava! Your relationship with us is also equal. O Madhusudana! Today, I have come to you first. From ancient times, the virtuous serve those who arrive first. O Janardana! You are now supreme among the virtuous ones in this world. You always deserve honour. You always follow virtuous conduct."

'Krishna replied, "I have no doubt that you arrived earlier. O king! But I saw Partha Dhananjaya first. O Suyodhana! Since you arrived first and since I saw him first, I will help both of you. But it has been said that the younger one should have the first choice. Therefore, I will offer the first choice to Partha Dhananjaya. There is a large number of one hundred million cowherds, equal to me in strength. They are famous as Narayanas and all of them are warriors who have fought in battle. These warriors, who are unassailable, will be the soldiers on one side. I will not bear weapons and will not fight in the battle. I will be on the other side. O Partha! According to your preferences, choose either of these two first. It is dharma that you should have the right of choice first."'

Vaishampayana said, 'At these words of Krishna, Kunti's son, Dhananjaya, chose Keshava, though he would not fight in the battle. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Knowing that Krishna was excluded from the battle, Duryodhana was extremely delighted at having obtained the thousands and thousands of warriors. O lord of the earth! He accepted all those soldiers. Then the fearsomely strong one went to Rohini's immensely strong son.[51] He reported to him the reason why he had come. Shouri[52] replied to Dhritarashtra's son in the following words. "O tiger among men! It is appropriate that you should know everything that I have said earlier in the kingdom of Virata, on the occasion of the wedding. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! It is for your sake that I sought to restrain Hrishikesha.[53] O king! I said repeatedly that my relationship with both of you was equal. But Keshava did not accept the words that I

had spoken. I cannot exist for an instant without Krishna. I will come to the aid of neither Partha, nor Duryodhana. After looking towards Vasudeva, this is the decision I have arrived at. You have been born in the Bharata lineage, one that is honoured by all the lords of the earth. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Go and fight in accordance with the dharma of the kshatriyas." At these words, he embraced the one who wields the plough as a weapon. Knowing that Krishna had excused himself from the war, he thought that his own victory had been assured. The king who was Dhritarashtra's son then went to Kritavarma. Kritavarma gave him an army that consisted of one akshouhini. Surrounded by all these terrible soldiers, the descendant of the Kuru lineage returned happily, causing delight to his well-wishers.

'When Duryodhana had left, Krishna asked Kiriti, "I will not take part in the battle. What did you think of when you decided to choose me?" Arjuna replied, "There is no doubt that you are alone capable of slaying all of them. O supreme among men! I am also capable of slaying them alone. Your deeds are famous in this world and this fame will also devolve on you. I too wish to be famous and that is the reason I have chosen you. It has always been my desire that you should be my charioteer. I have desired this over many nights and you should satisfy my wishes." Vasudeva said, "O Partha! It is appropriate that you desire to rival me. I will be your charioteer. Let your desire be satisfied." Having been thus delighted, Partha, accompanied by Krishna and surrounded by the foremost among the Dasharhas, returned to Yudhishthira.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'O king! On getting to know through messengers, Shalya, together with his maharatha sons, marched towards the Pandavas, surrounded by a large army. His army's camp extended for one and a half yojanas.[54] That bull among men was the lord of such a large army. Those brave warriors were dressed in colourful armour. They had colourful flags and bows. All of them wore colourful ornaments. They had colourful chariots and vehicles. Those hundreds and thousands of warriors wore their native attire and ornaments. Those bulls among the kshatriyas were the generals of the army. The beings were frightened and the earth trembled. Resting often, the army slowly marched towards the Pandavas. Duryodhana heard about the maharatha's great army. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He hastened towards him himself and showed him homage. In his honour, Duryodhana had pavilions constructed in beautiful regions, ornamented and adorned with gems. When he arrived at those pavilions, he was shown homage by Duryodhana and his advisers in every region, like an immortal. Then he reached another pavilion that was as resplendent as the abode of a god. It was full of all objects and possessed superhuman loveliness. He began to think very highly of himself and lowly about Purandara.[55] That bull among the kshatriyas was delighted and asked the servants, "Which one of Yudhishthira's men has constructed these pavilions? Bring

the builders of the pavilions here. It is my view that they should be rewarded." Duryodhana had concealed himself there and now showed himself to his maternal uncle.[56] On seeing him and learning of the efforts he had undertaken, the king of Madra embraced him. He told him in great delight, "Accept whatever you desire." Duryodhana replied, "May your words be true. Please grant me a boon that will ensure my welfare. It is appropriate that you should be the general of my entire army." Shalya said, "Agreed. What else do you wish me to do?" Gandhari's son kept on repeating, "Agreed! Agreed!" Having taken his leave of Shalya, he then returned to his own city. Shalya went to the Kounteyas to tell them what he had done.

'Having gone to Upaplavya, Shalya went to the camp and saw all the Pandavas there. When he went there, as was prescribed, the sons of Pandu offered him water to wash the feet,[57] the gift for a guest[58] and a cow. Then the king of Madra, the slayer of enemies, asked them about their welfare. He embraced Yudhishthira with great delight, Bhima, Arjuna and the twins who were his sister's sons. Having seated himself, Shalya then told Partha,[59] "O tiger among kings! O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Are you well? O supreme among victorious ones! It is good fortune that you have been freed from dwelling in the forest. O king! O Indra among kings! You performed an extremely difficult act in dwelling in the secluded forest, together with your brothers and Krishna. You performed an extremely difficult act in spending that terrible period of concealment. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is only unhappiness for one who has been dislodged from his kingdom. How can there be happiness? All this great misery has been brought on by Dhritarashtra's son. O king! O scorcher of enemies! You will obtain happiness after you have killed your enemies. O great king! O lord of men! You know about the nature of this world. O son![60] That is the reason you never act out of greed." O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Then the king told him about his encounter with Duryodhana and everything about how he had been served and the boon that he had granted. Yudhishthira replied, "O king! You performed a good deed, when you were happy in your own soul. O brave one! You must observe the pledge that you have given to Duryodhana. O fortunate one! O lord of the earth! But there is an act that I wish you to perform. O great king! You are the equal of Vasudeva in battle. O supreme among kings! When Karna and Arjuna confront each other in a duel, there is no doubt that you will perform the task of being Karna's charioteer. O king! If you wish to satisfy my desires, you must protect Arjuna. Your task will be to sap the energy of the son of the suta and ensure our victory. O maternal uncle! Though this is not a task that should be done, you must do it." Shalya said, "O Pandava! O fortunate one! You are asking me to sap the energy of that evil-minded son of a suta in battle. It is certain that I will be his charioteer in battle. He has always thought of me as Vasudeva's equal. O tiger among the Kurus! When he wishes to fight in the field of battle, it is certain that I will speak words that do him harm. O Pandava! They will make him lose his pride and lose his

energy. He will then be easy to kill. I tell you this truthfully. O son! I will do whatever you have asked me to do. I will do whatever else brings you pleasure. Together with Krishna, you have suffered miseries because of the gambling match. The son of the suta has spoken harsh words. O immensely radiant one! You have suffered hardships because of Jatasura[61] and Kichaka. Droupadi underwent several unholy sufferings, like Damayanti.[62] O brave one! All this unhappiness will result in the rise of happiness. Do not think that all this is because of your deeds. Destiny is more powerful. O Yudhishthira! Even great-souled ones confront difficulties. O lord of the earth! Even the gods have faced unhappiness. O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! We have heard that the great-souled Indra, the king of the gods, had to experience great unhappiness, together with his wife."'

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'Yudhishthira asked, "O Indra among kings! How did the great-souled Indra confront supreme and terrible unhappiness, together with his wife? I wish to know this."

'Shalya said, "O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Listen to this old and ancient historical account, about how Indra had to face unhappiness, together with his wife. There was Tvashtra Prajapati.[63] He was foremost among the gods and was a great ascetic. Out of hatred for Indra, he created a son with three heads. This immensely radiant one,[64] who was universal in form, coveted Indra's station. His three faces were terrible and were like the sun, the moon and the fire. He studied the Vedas with one mouth, he drank liquor with another. With another, he glanced at all the directions, as if he was going to drink them up. He was an ascetic, mild and self-controlled. He was engaged in dharma and austerities. O destroyer of enemies! His austerities were so great and terrible that they were extremely difficult to accomplish. Having witnessed his austerities, valour, truthfulness, Shakra was depressed that he might become Indra.[65] 'How can one get him addicted to desire, so that he does not torment through these great austerities? If Trishira continues to grow, he will swallow up the three worlds.'[66] O bull among the Bharata lineage! That intelligent one thought about this in many ways. He then instructed the apsaras to seduce Tvashtra's son. 'Go quickly, without any delay. Seduce Trishira and get him addicted to the pleasures of desire. O ones with the beautiful hips! Wear the garments of love. Adopt a charming demeanour. O fortunate ones! Tempt him and pacify my fear. O one with the beautiful limbs! I feel ill. I do not feel like myself. O ladies! Swiftly take away my extremely terrible fear.' The apsaras replied, 'O Shakra! O destroyer of Bala![67] We will make endeavours to seduce him, so that you have nothing to fear. That treasure among ascetics seems to burn everything down with his eyes. O god! We will go together and try to seduce him. We will try to bring him under our control and remove your fear.' Being instructed by Indra, they went to Trishira. There, the ones with the beautiful limbs adopted all kinds of allurements to

seduce him. They showed their dances. They exhibited the beauty of their limbs. But having seen this, the great ascetic was not perturbed. He was in control of his senses and was as calm as the full ocean. They made supreme efforts and returned to Shakra. All of them joined their hands in salutation and told the king of the gods, 'O lord! This one is extremely difficult to distract. It is impossible to sway him from his firmness. O immensely fortunate one! Do what must be done hereafter.' The immensely wise Shakra honoured the apsaras and sent them away.

'"He began to think about a way of killing the great-souled one. The brave and powerful king of the gods began to think about this in silence. The wise one began to think about a means of killing Trishira. He thought, 'I will swiftly strike him with the vajra today, so that he quickly ceases to exist. One who is stronger must not ignore a weak enemy who is strengthening.' Deciding on a course of action that was in accordance with the sacred texts, he firmly made up his mind to kill him. In great anger, Shakra hurled his vajra at Trishira. It was fearsome and terrible in form. It was like the fire. Injured and slain by the firm vajra, he fell down dead on the ground, like a mountain peak that has been shattered. On seeing him slain by the vajra and lying down like a mountain, Indra of the gods still found no peace, because his energy still blazed forth. Though he had been killed, his energy blazed forth, as if he was still alive. Shachi's consort[68] saw a woodcutter who had arrived there, engaged in his work. On seeing him, the chastiser of Paka[69] quickly said, 'Listen to my words. Immediately cut off his heads.' The woodcutter replied, 'His shoulders are extremely broad and my axe will not be able to cut through. Besides, I am incapable of performing a deed that is condemned by the virtous.' Indra said, 'Do not be afraid. Swiftly act according to my words. Through my favours, your weapon will become as strong as the vajra.' The woodcutter replied, 'I must know who you are and why you have performed this terrible deed today. I wish to hear all this. Tell me everything accurately.' Indra said, 'O woodcutter! I am Indra. Know me to be the king of the gods. Act according to my words. O woodcutter! Do not reflect on this.' The woodcutter replied, 'O Shakra! How is it that you are not ashamed of this cruel deed? Having killed the son of a rishi, are you not scared of the sin that comes from killing a brahmana?' Indra said, 'To purify myself, I will perform an extremely difficult task of dharma later. This was an extremely valorous enemy and I have killed him with my vajra. O woodcutter! I am anxious and frightened about this even now. Swiftly cut off his heads and I will show you my favours. When animals are sacrificed, men will give you their heads as a share. O woodcutter! This is the favour that I will show to you. Swiftly do that which brings me pleasure.' Having heard these words of the great Indra, the woodcutter sliced off Trishira's heads with his axe. When the heads had been cut off, birds like *kapinjalas*, *tittiras* and *kalavimkas* issued from them.[70] From the mouth through which the Vedas had been studied and *soma* juice had been drunk, kapinjalas quickly flew away. O king! O Pandava! From the mouth

through which he glanced in every direction and seemed to drink them up, tittiras flew out. O bull among the Bharata lineage! From the mouth through which Trishira used to drink liquor, kalavimkas flew away. When the heads had been cut off, Maghavan[71] was freed from his fever and happily went to heaven. The woodcutter also returned to his own home.

'"On hearing that his son had been killed by Shakra, Tvashtra Prajapati's eyes reddened in rage and he spoke these words. 'My son was always intent on austerities. He was forgiving, self-controlled and the master of his senses. He committed no crime. Yet violence has been done to him. For this reason, I will create Vritra, with a view to destroying Shakra. Let the worlds witness my valour and the great strength of my austerities. Let the evil-souled and evil-minded Indra of the gods also behold.' That extremely famous and enraged ascetic touched water. He offered oblations into the fire. Having created the terrible Vritra, he told him, 'O enemy of Indra! Through the strength of my asceticism, increase in power.' He grew and touched the sky and was like the sun and the fire. 'What shall I do?' he asked, like the sun at the time of destruction. Having been told that he should kill Shakra, he went to heaven. O supreme among the Kuru lineage! There ensued an angry and extremely terrible battle and the valorous Vritra grasped Shatakratu Indra of the gods. Overcome with rage, Vritra opened his mouth and swallowed him. When Shakra had been swallowed by Vritra, the lords of heaven were terrified. Those greatly spirited ones created a yawn that would be Vritra's destruction. When Vritra yawned, the destroyer of Bala contracted his limbs and emerged from the gaping mouth. Ever since then, the yawn has remained in all living beings. On seeing Shakra emerge, all the gods were delighted. Vritra and Vasava again engaged in a battle. O bull among the Bharata lineage! It was a terrible fight that went on for a long time. Because of the power of Tvashtra's austerities, Vritra's power increased in that battle and Shakra retreated. When he retreated, the gods were immersed in supreme despondency. They were deluded because of Tvashtra's energy. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Together with Shakra, they sought the advice of all the sages. O king! Deluded by fear, they reflected about what should be done. In their minds,[72] all of them went to the imperishable and great-souled Vishnu. All of them seated themselves on the peak of Mandara, wishing to kill Vritra."'

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'"Indra said, 'O gods! This entire indestructible universe has been pervaded by Vritra. There is nothing that is equal to him and can stand up to him. I was capable in earlier times. But I am now incapable. O fortunate ones! What can I do? It seems to me that it is extremely difficult to overcome him. This energetic and great-souled one is infinitely valorous in battle. He will devour the three worlds, with all the gods, the asuras and men. O residents of heaven! Therefore, listen to what I have decided. We must approach

the abode of the great-souled Vishnu. We must consult with him about the means for killing this evil-souled one.'"

'Shalya said, "At these words of Maghavan, the gods, together with the masses of rishis, then sought refuge with the immensely strong god Vishnu, one with whom refuge should be sought. All of them were oppressed with the fear of Vritra and spoke to Vishnu, the lord of all the gods. 'O lord! You covered the three worlds in three strides.[73] O Vishnu! You killed the daityas in battle and obtained the *amrita*.[74] Having bound down the great daitya Bali, you made Shakra the lord of the gods. You are the lord of all the worlds. Everything is vested in you. You are the god who is the great god. You are revered by all the worlds. O supreme among the immortals! Become the salvation of Indra and the gods. O destroyer of asuras! The entire universe has become pervaded by Vritra.' Vishnu replied, 'I will certainly do that which ensures your supreme welfare. I will tell you a means whereby he will cease to exist. With all the rishis and the gandharvas, go to the spot where the one with the universal form resides. Use conciliation towards him. You will then be able to vanquish him. O gods! Shakra will go there. Using my energy, I will invisibly enter his supreme weapon, the vajra. O supreme among gods! Go there with the rishis and the gandharvas. Without any delay, bring about a truce between Vritra and Shakra.' Having been thus addressed by the god, the rishis and the denizens of heaven went together, having placed Shakra at the forefront.

'"All those greatly energetic ones approached him. He was burning the ten directions with the radiance of his energy. He seemed to be swallowing the three worlds and was like the sun and the moon. Together with Shakra, the gods saw Vritra there. The rishis approached and spoke to Vritra in pleasant words. 'O invincible one! The entire universe is pervaded by your energy. But you will not be able to vanquish Vasava, who is supremely valorous. Since the two of you began to fight, a very long period of time has elapsed. All the beings, including the gods, the asuras and men, are oppressed. O Vritra! Let there always be friendship between you and Shakra. You will then obtain happiness and eternally dwell in Shakra's world.' Hearing these words of the rishis, the greatly strong asura Vritra bowed his head in obeisance before all of them and said, 'O immensely fortunate ones! O all the gandharvas! O unblemished ones! I have heard everything that you have said. Now listen to me. O gods! We are both extremely energetic. How can there be friendship between us?' The rishis replied, 'Righteous ones should meet, at least once. After that, what is destined will happen. No one transgresses an agreement with a righteous person. Therefore, there should be an agreement between those who are righteous. An agreement between the righteous is firm and eternal. Even in times of difficulties, the wise say that this is desirable. Great welfare derives from an agreement with a righteous person. That is the reason wise ones do not cause violence to righteous ones. Indra is honoured by righteous ones and great-souled ones reside with him. He also speaks the truth, isn't mean, follows dharma and is

determined in his decisions. Let there always be peace between you and Shakra. You must have trust. Do not think otherwise.' Having heard the words of the maharshis, the immensely radiant one told them, 'O illustrious ones! I must certainly revere ascetics. O gods! If you carry out everything that I am asking you to, I will do everything that these bulls among the brahmanas have asked me to do. O Indras among brahmanas! I will be incapable of being killed by Shakra, together with the gods, by anything that is dry, anything that is wet, anything made of stone or wood, by any weapon, by the vajra,[75] and during the day or during the night. Such an agreement with Shakra will always please me.' O bull among the Bharata lineage! The rishis said that it would be this way. When this agreement had been made, Vritra was delighted.

'"But Shakra was always full of resentment. He kept thinking about a means of killing Vritra. The destroyer of Bala and Vritra was always anxious and kept looking for a weakness. One day, he saw the great asura on the shores of the ocean. It was evening and the extremely lovely, but terrible, muhurta had arrived.[76] He thought about the boon that the great-souled one had been granted. 'It is the terrible evening. It is not night or day. He is the enemy who has robbed me of everything. I can certainly kill him now. He is immensely powerful and has a gigantic body. If I do not kill the great asura Vritra through deceit today, it will not be good for me.' Shakra thought in this way and remembered Vishnu. He saw the foam in the ocean, as large as a mountain. 'This is not wet, nor dry. Nor is it a weapon. If I fling it at Vritra, he will perish in an instant.' With the vajra, he swiftly flung the foam at Vritra. Vishnu entered the foam and destroyed Vritra. With Vritra dead, the darkness vanished from all the directions. An auspicious breeze began to blow and the beings rejoiced. All the gods, the gandharvas, the yakshas, the rakshasas, the serpents and the rishis praised the great Indra with many hymns. Having been honoured by all the beings, he pronounced benedictions on all the beings. With the enemy having been slain, Vasava was delighted, and together with the gods, showed his homage to Vishnu, who is learned in dharma and is supreme in the three worlds.

'"After the extremely valorous Vritra, who had terrified the gods, had been killed, Shakra was overcome by falsehood[77] and was extremely depressed. After having killed Trishira earlier, he had taken on the sin of killing a brahmana. Bereft of his senses and consciousness, Indra of the gods went to the extremities of the world. Overcome by his own sins, he no longer possessed any wisdom. He remained immersed in water, writhing like a serpent. Thanks to the fear of having killed a brahmana, Indra of the gods was destroyed. The earth seemed to be ravaged.[78] There were no trees and the groves dried up. The flows stopped in the rivers and the ponds were without water. Because of the lack of rains, there was great distress among the beings and the gods. All the maharshis were extremely terrified. The entire universe was without a king and was confronted with calamities. The frightened gods thought, 'Who will be our king now?'

The gods and the rishis in heaven no longer had a king of the gods. And none of the gods had a desire to be the king."'

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'Shalya said, "Then all the rishis and all the gods said, 'Nahusha is majestic. Let us appoint him king of the gods and the lord of the thirty gods.' All of them went to him and said, 'O lord of the earth! Be our king.' O king! Nahusha thought about his own welfare and told the gods and the masses of rishis, accompanied by the ancestors, 'I am weak. I am incapable of protecting you. It is a powerful one who should be the king. Shakra was always powerful.' All the gods, with the rishis at the forefront, again told him, 'You will be endowed with the power of our austerities. Protect the kingdom of heaven. There is no doubt that we are terribly afraid of each other.[79] O Indra among kings! Be our king in heaven. You will absorb the energy of gods, danavas, yakshas, rishis, rakshasas, gandharvas and all beings as soon as you behold them. You will then be powerful. Always placing dharma at the forefront, be the lord of all the worlds and the herdsman of the brahmarshis and gods in heaven.' Having obtained this extremely rare boon, he became the king in heaven.

'"He had always had dharma in his soul. But he now became addicted to desire. Nahusha, the king of the gods, sported in many different ways in all the gardens of the gods, in the grove of Nandana,[80] in Kailasa on the slopes of the Himalayas, on the mountains Mandara, Shveta, Sahya, Mahendra and Malaya and in oceans and rivers, surrounded by apsaras and the maidens of the gods. He listened to many kinds of celestial accounts, pleasant to the ear, and to all kinds of musical instruments and songs with sweet sounds. Vishvavasu,[81] Narada, masses of gandharvas and apsaras and the six seasons in personified form, waited upon the Indra of the gods. A fragrant breeze blew—pleasant, charming and cool.

'"While the great-souled Nahusha was sporting in this way, his eyes fell upon the goddess who was Shakra's beloved queen. On seeing her, the evil-souled one spoke to all his courtiers. 'Why doesn't the goddess who is Indra's queen serve me? I am Indra of the gods now. I am also the lord of the worlds. Let Shachi swiftly come to my abode today.' On hearing these words, the goddess was distraught and told Brihaspati, 'O brahmana! Protect me from Nahusha. I am seeking refuge with you. O brahmana! You have always told me that I bear all the auspicious marks. You have spoken of me as the beloved of the king of the gods, deserving of happiness, and as one who will never be a widow. I will be the wife of one and will be devoted to my husband. Let those words that you have spoken to me earlier, come true. O illustrious one! O lord! What you have said earlier has never been false. O supreme among brahmanas! Therefore, ensure that what you have said comes true.' At this, Brihaspati told Indrani,[82] who was confounded with fear, 'O goddess! What I have told you will certainly come true. You will soon see Indra,

king of the gods, return here. I tell you truthfully that you have nothing to fear from Nahusha. In a short while, I will unite you with Shakra again.' Nahusha heard that Indrani had gone and sought refuge with Brihaspati Angirasa.[83] The king was enraged."'

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'Shalya said, "On seeing that Nahusha was enraged, the gods, with the rishis at the forefront, went and told Nahusha, the king of the gods, whose visage was terrible. 'O king of the gods! Conquer your anger. O lord! The universe, with all its asuras, gandharvas, kinnaras and giant serpents, is terrified at your wrath. O virtuous one! Conquer this anger. Those who are like you are never enraged. That goddess is the wife of another. O lord of the gods! Be pacified. Turn your mind away from the sin of molesting another one's wife. O fortunate one! You are the king of the gods. You should protect the subjects in accordance with dharma.' He was addressed in this way, but did not accept these words. He was deluded by desire. Then the lord of the gods spoke to the gods about Indra. 'The illustrious Ahalya was the wife of a rishi. But Indra had raped her earlier, while her husband was still alive.[84] Why did you not restrain him then? In earlier times, Indra performed many cruel deeds. He acted against dharma and resorted to deceit. Why did you not restrain him then? Let the goddess serve me. That will be the best for her. And that will always ensure welfare for the gods too.' The gods replied, 'O lord of heaven! We will bring Indrani here, as you wish. O brave one! O lord of the gods! Conquer your anger and be pleased.' O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Having said this, the gods, together with the rishis, went to Brihaspati and told Indrani the inauspicious words. 'We know that Indrani has sought refuge in your abode and that you have granted her freedom from fear. O Indra among brahmanas! O supreme among *devarshis*! O greatly radiant one! The gods, together with the gandharvas and the rishis, seek your favours. Let Indrani be handed over to Nahusha. Nahusha is the greatly radiant king of the gods and is superior to Indra. Let this one with the excellent complexion and with the excellent thighs accept him as her husband.' Having been thus addressed, the goddess shed loud tears.

'"She was miserable and weeping and spoke these words to Brihaspati. 'I do not wish to have Nahusha as my husband and give up my lord. O brahmana! I have sought refuge with you. Save me from this great calamity.' Brihaspati replied, 'It is certain that I will not give up Indrani, who has sought refuge with me. She follows dharma. Her conduct is in accordance with dharma. O unblemished one! I will not give you up. I do not wish to perform an act that should not be done, especially because I am a brahmana. I have heard about dharma. I am truthful in my conduct. I know the injunctions of dharma. I will not do this. O supreme among the gods! Depart. In these matters, Brahma recounted a song in earlier times. Listen to it. "He who hands over to the enemy someone who has sought refuge, his seed will not grow at the time of sowing. His rains will not shower at

the time of rains. When he wishes for protection, he will not receive it. That insensate one will have a barren harvest. That one, whose mind has been deluded, will be dislodged from the world of heaven. The gods refuse to accept the offerings of one who gives away a frightened one who has sought succour. His offspring will perish before the right time. His ancestors will always discard him. If one hands over a frightened one who has sought succour to the enemy, the gods and Indra hurl their vajra at him." Knowing this, I will not hand over Shachi Indrani, who is famous in the world as Shakra's beloved wife. O best among the gods! What is good for her will also be good for me. Let us act according to that. I will not give Shachi away.' Then the gods told their preceptor, who was supreme in the Angirasa lineage, 'O Brihaspati! You advise us about the best course of action.' Brihaspati replied, 'Let this beautiful goddess ask for some time from Nahusha. I think this will ensure Indrani's welfare and ours too. Time brings many impediments. It is time which leads to another time. Because of the boon he has obtained, Nahusha is insolent and powerful.' When he had spoken thus, the gods were delighted and told him, 'O brahmana! What you have spoken is for the welfare of all the denizens of heaven. O best of brahmanas! Let us seek the favours of this goddess.' Then all the gods, with Agni at the forefront, anxious to ensure the welfare of all the worlds, told Indrani, 'You bear the entire universe, with everything that is immobile and mobile. You are true and devoted to one husband. Go to Nahusha. That lord of the earth, Nahusha, who lusts after you, will soon be destroyed. Shakra will become the lord of the gods again.' Having thus decided on a course of action that would ensure success, Indrani went to Nahusha, whose visage was terrible.

'"She was bashful. Having beheld her in her youth and beauty, the evil-souled Nahusha was delighted. He lost his senses because of desire."'

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'Shalya said, "Having seen her, Nahusha, king of the gods, addressed her thus. 'O one with the beautiful smiles! I am Indra of the three worlds. O one with the beautiful thighs! O one with the beautiful complexion! Serve me as your husband.' Having been thus addressed by Nahusha, the goddess, who was devoted to her husband, trembled in fear, like a plantain tree during a storm. She joined her hands in salutation and bowed her head before Brahma. She told Nahusha, king of the gods whose visage was terrible, 'O lord of the gods! I am asking for some time from you. I do not know where Shakra is. I do not know where he has gone. O lord! Let me try to ascertain the truth. Alternatively, if this cannot be found out, I will serve you. I am telling you this truthfully.' Having been thus addressed by Indrani, Nahusha was delighted. Nahusha replied, 'O one with the beautiful hips! It will be as you say. Once you have got to know, your task is to come here. Remember the truth you have sworn.' Thus given permission by Nahusha, the beautiful one departed. The ascetic one went to Brihaspati's

abode.

'"O supreme among kings! On hearing her words, the gods, with Agni at the forefront, began to consult about what might be done for the sake of Shakra. They went and met Vishnu, the god of the gods and anxious, the ones who were eloquent with words addressed these words to the lord Vishnu. 'Shakra, the lord of the masses of gods, has been burdened because he has killed a brahmana.[85] O lord of the gods! You are our refuge. O lord! You were there before the universe was created. You assumed the form of Vishnu for the sake of protecting all beings. When Vasava slew Vritra through your valour, he was burdened because he had killed a brahmana. O supreme among the masses of gods! You decide on a way for him to be freed.' Having heard the words of the gods, Vishnu replied, 'Let Shakra offer a sacrifice to me. I will purify the wielder of the vajra. Having worshipped me, let the chastiser of Paka perform a holy horse sacrifice. Without any fear, he will then become Indra of the gods again. The evil-minded Nahusha will ensure his destruction through his own deeds. O gods! You must be patient and endure him for some time.' Having heard the pure and true words of Vishnu, which were like amrita, all the masses of gods, the preceptors[86] and the gods went to the region where Shakra had hidden himself, anxious with fear.

'"Then the great-souled and great Indra performed the extremely great horse sacrifice. O king! This was for the sake of purifying him from the taint of killing a brahmana. O Yudhishthira! He distributed the killing of a brahmana over trees, rivers, mountains, the earth and women.[87] With it having been thrown out and distributed among beings, the lord of the gods was cleansed of his fever. Vasava's soul became pure and he assumed his earlier form. The slayer of Bala saw that Nahusha was not going to move from his position. Having obtained the boon, he was now unassailable, because he had absorbed the energy of all beings. Therefore, the god who was Shachi's husband vanished again. Waiting for the appropriate time, he remained invisible to all beings. When Shakra seemed to have been destroyed, Shachi was immersed in grief. In great misery, the goddess began to lament. 'Alas, Shakra! If I have ever given, if I have ever received gifts, if my seniors have been satisfied with me, if there is any truth in me, I will only have one husband. I am bowing down before this divine and auspicious goddess Night, which has now embarked on a northern course.[88] May my wishes be fulfilled.' When Night arrived, the goddess worshipped her. Because of her devotion to her husband and because of her truthfulness, Upashruti[89] appeared before her. The goddess asked Upashruti, 'Show me the region where the king of the gods is. Use the truth to show me the truth.'"'

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'Shalya said, "On seeing that the goddess[90] was endowed with youth and beauty, thus did Upashruti appear before the beautiful and virtuous one. Indrani was delighted and

showing her homage, said, ‘O one with the beautiful face! I wish to know who you are. Tell me.’ Upashruti replied, ‘O goddess! I am Upashruti. Since I am satisfied with your truthfulness, I have shown myself before you. You are devoted to your husband. You have restraint and are self-controlled. I will show you Shakra, the god who killed Vritra. O fortunate one! Follow me quickly and you will be able to see that supreme among gods.’ As the goddess[91] went on ahead, Indrani followed her. Having traversed many forests of the gods and many mountains, she crossed the Himalayas and went to its northern slopes. She came to an ocean that was many yojanas wide. She then went to a large island that was covered with many trees and creepers. She saw a divine lake there, populated by many kinds of birds. It was pure and a hundred yojanas broad, with a similar length. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Thousands of divine lotuses bloomed there, with five colours, and bees buzzed around. She broke the stalk of a lotus and entered with her.[92] She saw Shatakratu, who had also entered there. On seeing her lord in that extremely tiny form, the goddess and Upashruti also assumed extremely tiny forms.

‘“Indrani praised Indra for the famous deeds he had performed earlier. Having been thus praised, the god Purandara told Shachi, ‘Why have you come here and how did you get to know that I was here?’ She then told him about what Nahusha had tried to do. ‘When he became the Indra of the three worlds, he became insolent because of his valour. O Shatakratu! Having become insolent, the evil-souled one asked me to serve him. That evil one has granted me some time. O lord! If you do not save me, he will bring me under his powers. O Shakra! I am tormented because of this and have come to you. O mighty-armed one! Destroy that terrible Nahusha. His mind is set on evil. You are the destroyer of daityas and danavas. Reveal your own self. O lord! Regain your own energy. Rule the kingdom of the gods.’”’

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‘Shalya said, “Having been thus addressed by Shachi, the illustrious one replied, ‘This is not the time for valour. Nahusha is superior in strength. O beautiful one! The rishis have made his powers increase because of the oblations he has offered to the gods and the ancestors.[93] O goddess! I will indicate a course of action and you should carry it out. You must carry this task out in secrecy. O beautiful one! You must not talk about it in any way. O slender-waisted one! Go to Nahusha and tell him when you are alone, “O lord of the universe! Come to me in a celestial vehicle that is borne by the rishis. I will then happily come under your control.” Tell him this.’ Thus addressed by the king of the gods, his lotus-eyed wife told him that it would be this way. She went to Nahusha. When Nahusha saw her, he was surprised and spoke these words. ‘O one with the beautiful thighs! You are welcome. O sweet-smiling one! What can I do for you? I am devoted to you. Love me. O fortunate one! O spirited one! What task do you wish me to perform

for you? Do not be shy. O slender-waisted one! You should have trust in me. O goddess! I truthfully swear that I will do whatever you ask me to.' Indrani replied, 'O lord of the universe! I am waiting out the time that you have granted to me. O lord of the gods! After that, you will become my husband. There is a task that I desire in my heart. O king of the gods! Think about it. O king! I will tell you about it, provided that you do what brings me pleasure. Out of love, I am speaking these words to you. If you carry them out, I will come under your control. As his vehicles, Indra possessed horse, elephants and chariots. O lord of the gods! I desire a vehicle from you that has not existed earlier, one that Vishnu, Rudra, the asuras or the rakshasas do not possess. O great king! O lord! Let all the rishis bear you together on a palanquin. O king! That will bring me pleasure. You should not be the equal of the asuras or the gods. With your valour, you should grasp all their energy by glancing at them. O brave one! No one will be able to stand before you.'

'"Having been thus addressed, Nahusha was extremely delighted. The Indra of the gods spoke these words to the unblemished one. 'O one whose complexion is beautiful! You have spoken about an extraordinary vehicle. O goddess! I have taken a strong fancy towards it. O one with the beautiful face! I am under your powers. One who makes the sages carry his vehicle cannot be weak in strength. I am a powerful ascetic. I am the lord of the past, the present and the future. When I am angry, the universe ceases to exist. Everything is vested in me—the gods, the danavas, the gandharvas, the kinnaras, the serpents and the rakshasas. O sweet-smiling one! All the worlds are not enough to counter my anger. I take the energy from anyone I look at with my eyes. O goddess! There is no doubt that I will act in accordance with your words. The seven rishis[94] will bear me and all the brahmarshis. O beautiful one! Behold my greatness and my prosperity.' Having spoken thus, he gave the goddess with the beautiful face permission to leave.

'"He did not possess the qualities of a brahmana. He was powerful and intoxicated. He was insolent because of the boon. He yoked the rishis, who were established in the rules, to his celestial vehicle. That evil-souled one was overcome by desire and made the rishis bear him. Having been dismissed by Nahusha, she told Brihaspati, 'Only a little bit of the time that Nahusha granted me is left. Hunt out Shakra quickly. I love him and show me compassion.' The illustrious Brihaspati told her, 'It will be this way. O goddess! You have no reason to fear the evil-minded Nahusha. He will not last for a long time. That worst of men has been destroyed. He is ignorant of dharma. O beautiful one! He has made the maharshis carry him and has been slain.[95] I will offer oblations for the destruction of that evil-minded one. I will go to Shakra. O fortunate one! Do not be afraid.' Having kindled a fire in accordance with the prescribed rites, the immensely energetic Brihaspati offered oblations to discover where the king of the gods was. The illustrious god of the fire himself appeared. He adopted the extraordinary form of a woman and suddenly disappeared. With the speed of the mind, he searched the directions, the sub-

directions, the mountains, the forests, the earth and the sky, and returned within a brief moment to Brihaspati. Agni said, 'O Brihaspati! I cannot see the king of the gods anywhere. Only the waters remain to be searched and I am incapable of entering the waters. O brahmana! I have no means of going there. What else can I do for you?' Having been thus addressed, the preceptor of the gods said, 'O greatly resplendent one! Enter.' Agni replied, 'I cannot enter the waters. That will be my destruction. I am seeking refuge with you. O immensely radiant one! Be pacified. The fire arose from the waters,[96] kshatriyas from brahmanas and iron from stone. Their energy goes everywhere, but is pacified if they return to their wombs.'"'

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'"Brihaspati said, 'O Agni! You are the mouth of all the gods. You carry the oblations. You are inside all beings[97] and roam around like a secret witness. The wise ones have spoken of you as one, and again as three.[98] O bearer of oblations![99] Without you, the universe is instantly destroyed. Having bowed down before you, the brahmanas go to whatever eternal destinations they have won because of their own deeds, together with their wives and their sons. You are the bearer of oblations. You are the supreme oblation. You are worshipped at sacrifices. You are the supreme sacrifice. O bearer of oblations! Having created the three worlds, you become the kindling and cook them when the time has come.[100] You gave birth to this entire universe. O Agni! You are the foremost reason for its establishment again. O Agni! You are the source of all water. You are the blazing lightning. The flames that issue from you burn all beings. Water is based on you. Everything is this entire universe is based on you. O purifying one! There is nothing in the three worlds that is not known to you. Everyone loves one's womb, so enter the water without any fear.[101] I will make you grow with my eternal brahmana mantras.'"

'Shalya said, "Having been thus praised by the illustrious and supreme sage Brihaspati, the bearer of oblations spoke these supreme words. 'I tell you truthfully that I will show Shakra to you.' The fire entered the water, with its oceans and ponds. It went to the lake where Shatakratu was secretly hidden. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He searched through the lotuses and found Indra of the gods in the middle of a stalk. He returned quickly and told Brihaspati, 'The lord is hidden inside the stalk of a lotus, in a very tiny form.' With all the gods, rishis and gandharvas, Brihaspati went there and propitiated the slayer of Bala because of his earlier deeds. 'O Shakra! You killed the great and terrible asura named Namuchi, and Shambara and Bala, both of whom were terrible in valour. O Shatakratu! Grow and destroy all the enemies. O wielder of the vajra! Arise and see the gods and the rishis who have come. O great Indra! O lord! You saved the world by killing the danavas. You used the foam of the waters, strengthened through Vishnu's energy, to slay Vritra earlier. O king of the gods!

O lord of the universe! You are worshipped by all beings. You are the one who should be worshipped. There is no other being in the world who is your equal. O Shakra! You sustain all the beings. You ensured the greatness of the gods. Save the world of the gods. O great Indra! Increase in strength.' When he had been thus propitiated, he slowly grew. He assumed his own form and became endowed with strength. The god asked his preceptor Brihaspati, who was standing before him, 'What task remains? The great asura who was the son of Tvashtra has been killed and so has the extremely gigantic Vritra who wished to devour the world.'[102] Brihaspati replied, 'The human King Nahusha has obtained the kingdom of the gods through the energy of the gods and the masses of rishis. He is grievously oppressing all of us.' Indra asked, 'How did Nahusha obtain the kingdom of the gods, difficult to attain? O Brihaspati! What austerities did he possess and what was his valour?'

'"Brihaspati said, 'The frightened gods wished for a Shakra, after you had given up the position of the great Indra. All the gods, the ancestors, the rishis and the masses of gandharvas then assembled. O Shakra! They went and told Nahusha, "Be our king and the herdsman of the universe." Nahusha replied, "I do not have the capacity. You must make me increase through the energy of your austerities." The gods acted in accordance with these words. He became a king with terrible valour. Having obtained the kingdom of the three worlds, that evil-souled one makes the ascetics bear him throughout the world. There is poison in his extremely terrible eyesight and it robs the energy. Nahusha must never look at you. All the gods are frightened of Nahusha. They roam in secret, so that he may not look at them.'"

'Shalya said, "Thus spoke the best of the Angirasa lineage, Brihaspati. At that time, Kubera, guardian of the world, and the ancient Vaivasvata Yama, and the gods Soma and Varuna also arrived. When they arrived, they told the great Indra. 'It is extremely fortunate that the son of Tvashtra and Vritra have been slain. It is extremely fortunate that you are hale and unhurt. O Shakra! We see that your enemies have been killed.' Shakra then replied in the appropriate way and incited them against Nahusha. 'Nahusha, the king of the gods, is terrible in form. Therefore, you must assist me against him.' They said, 'Nahusha is terrible in form. O god! There is poison in his eyes and we are frightened of him. O king! O Shakra! If you truly vanquish Nahusha, we should also be entitled to our share.'[103] Indra replied, 'It shall be that way. The lord of the waters,[104] Kubera and Yama will also be instated with me. Uniting today, we will vanquish the enemy Nahusha, whose eyesight is terrible.' Then the flaming fire told Shakra, 'Give me a share also and I will render you assistance.' Shakra said, 'You will also get a share. In great sacrifices, there will be one share for Indra and Agni together.'[105] Having thought about this, the illustrious and great Indra, the chastiser of Paka, made Kubera the lord of all the yakshas and riches, Vaivasvata of the ancestors and Varuna of the waters. With due honours, Shakra, the granter of boons, gave them these lordships."'

‘Shalya said, “When the intelligent king of the gods was thinking about a means for killing Nahusha, together with the guardians of the world,[106] the illustrious ascetic Agastya appeared. He showed homage to Indra of the gods and said, ‘It is fortunate that you have gained in strength. Vishvarupa[107] has been destroyed and the asura Vritra has been slain. O Purandara! It is through good fortune too that Nahusha has been dislodged from the kingdom of the gods. O destroyer of Bala! It is through good fortune that I look upon you now.’ Indra replied, ‘O maharshi! Welcome. I am happy to see you. Please accept from me water for washing the feet, water for washing the mouth, the cow and the arghya.’[108] Having been thus honoured, that supreme of sages, bull among brahmanas, seated himself and the lord of the gods happily asked him, ‘O illustrious one! O supreme among brahmanas! I wish to hear from you how Nahusha, whose mind was set on evil, has been dislodged from heaven.’

‘“Agastya said, ‘O Shakra! Listen to the pleasant news of how the evil-souled and evil-acting King Nahusha, insolent because of his strength, has been dislodged from heaven. The immensely fortunate devarshis and the unblemished brahmarshis were exhausted at having to bear the evil-acting Nahusha. O god! O supreme among victorious ones! They posed a question to Nahusha. “Brahma has chanted mantras that should be used when cows are sprinkled.[109] Are these accurate?” O Vasava! This is the question they asked. Nahusha’s senses were confounded because of darkness and he replied in the negative. The rishis said, “You are engaged in adharma. You do not know dharma. For us, they are accurate, because the maharshis have uttered them earlier.” O Vasava! While he was arguing with the sages, oppressed by adharma, this man touched my head with his foot.[110] O consort of Shachi! Because of this, he lost his energy and his prosperity. I told the anxious one who was oppressed by fear, “This was undertaken by Brahma earlier and was observed by the brahmarshis.[111] They should not be censured and you have censured them. You have touched my head with your foot. O stupid one! The rishis are like Brahma and are unassailable. You have made them carry around your vehicle. Therefore, you will lose your brilliance and will be dislodged from heaven. O evil one! With all your merits exhausted, you will be dislodged and will descend on earth. You will roam for ten thousand years in the form of a giant serpent. After this period is over, you will return again to heaven.” O destroyer of enemies! Thus, the evil-souled one was dislodged from the kingdom of heaven. O Shakra! It is through good fortune that the thorn of brahmanas has been uprooted and we are flourishing. O consort of Shachi! Return to heaven and protect the worlds. Conquer your senses and conquer your enemies. Be praised by the maharshis.’”

‘Shalya said, “The gods, surrounded by the masses of maharshis, were extremely satisfied. So were the ancestors, the yakshas, the serpents, the rakshasas, the gandharvas, the maidens of the gods and all the masses of apsaras. O lord of the earth!

All the lakes, rivers, mountains and oceans approached and said, ‘O destroyer of enemies![112] It is through good fortune that you are flourishing. It is through good fortune that the evil Nahusha has been dislodged by the wise Agastya. It is through good fortune that the one who was evil in his conduct has become a snake on the face of the earth.’”’

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‘Shalya said, “Then Shakra was praised by the masses of gandharvas and apsaras. He ascended Airavata, the king of elephants, who possessed all the auspicious marks. The immensely energetic god of the fire was there, maharshi Brihaspati, Yama, Varuna and Kubera, lord of riches. Surrounded by all the gods, gandharvas and apsaras, Shakra, the destroyer of Vritra, went to the three worlds. Having been united with the great Indrani, Shatakratu, the king of the gods, was supremely delighted and began to rule as the king of the gods.

‘“The illustrious Angira[113] appeared. He honoured Indra of the gods with mantras from Atharva Veda and he bestowed a boon on Atharva Angirasa.[114] ‘This Veda will be known by the name of Atharva Angirasa. For example, you will also obtain a share in the sacrifice.’[115] O great king! Having thus honoured the illustrious Atharva Angirasa, Shatakratu, the king of the gods, gave him permission to leave. Indra honoured the thirty gods and the rishis, rich in austerities. O king! He happily ruled over the subjects, in accordance with dharma. Such were the difficulties confronted by Indra, together with his wife. With a desire to kill his enemies, he lived in disguise.

‘“O Indra among kings! You should not be angry because you confronted difficulties in the great forest, together with Droupadi and your great-souled brothers. O Indra among kings! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O descendant of the Kourava lineage! You will also regain your kingdom, the way Shakra obtained it after killing Vritra. The evil-acting Nahusha was evil in intelligence and hated brahmanas. Because of Agastya’s curse, he was destroyed for an eternal period of time. O destroyer of enemies! This will also happen to your evil-souled enemies. Karna, Duryodhana and the others will soon confront their destruction. O brave one! O lord! With your brothers and Droupadi, you will then enjoy the earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean. This is the account of Shakra’s victory, equal in importance to the Vedas. It should be heard by a king who wishes for victory. O supreme among victorious ones! It is for that reason that I have recounted it, for the sake of your victory. O Yudhishthira! Great-souled ones are strengthened when they are praised. O great-souled Yudhishthira! Because of Duryodhana’s crimes and the strength of Bhima and Arjuna, the defeat of the kshatriyas will occur. He who always reads this account of Indra’s victory, has his soul cleansed and having won heaven, rejoices in the afterlife. That man does not have any fear from enemies and he is never without sons. He never confronts a calamity. He always has a long life. He is

triumphant everywhere and is never vanquished."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O bull among the Bharata lineage! The king was thus assured by Shalya. In accordance with the prescribed rites, the supreme among those who uphold dharma showed Shalya homage. Having heard Shalya's words, Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, spoke these words to the mighty-armed king of Madra. "There is no doubt that you will be Karna's charioteer and your task is to destroy Karna's energy through your prowess." Shalya replied, "I will do as you have asked me to do and everything else that I am able to do for your sake." O destroyer of enemies! Having taken his leave from Kounteya, Shalya, the handsome lord of Madra, then went with his army to Duryodhana.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'The brave maharatha Satyaki of the Satvatas then arrived with a large army, with the four types of forces, before Yudhishthira. His immensely valorous warriors had arrived from many countries. They were courageous and wielded many weapons. The army was beautiful. It had battleaxes, slings, spears, javelins, clubs, lances, swords, axes, nooses, unblemished scimitars, swords,[116] bows, helmets and many different kinds of arrows that had been washed in oil. With all these weapons, that army dazzled like a cloud. The soldiers shone, like lightning in the midst of a cloud. O king! That akshouhini of soldiers joined Yudhishthira's army and having entered, vanished, like a small river into the ocean. In a similar way, Dhrishtaketu, bull among the Chedis, brought an akshouhini to the infinitely energetic Pandavas. Jayatsena of Magadha, Jarasandha's son, arrived before Dharmaraja with one akshouhini of soldiers. O Indra among kings! Pandya, who dwelt by the shores of the ocean, arrived before Yudhishthira, surrounded by many kinds of warriors. When that force arrived, the soldiers looked extremely radiant. O king! Strong and well attired, it was worthy of being looked at. Drupada had an army that consisted of soldiers from many regions. There were handsome and brave men and his maharatha sons too. King Virata of Matsya, the lord of an army, came to the Pandavas, with kings from the mountainous regions. In this way, the great-souled sons of Pandu assembled seven akshouhinis. They had many flags. The Pandavas wished to fight with the Kurus and this delighted them.

'The delight of Dhritarashtra's son also increased. Bhagadatta, lord of the earth, gave him one akshouhini of soldiers. That army had *chinas* and *kiratas* and was covered with gold.[117] That army looked like a forest of *karnikaras*.[118] O descendant of the Kuru lineage! In a similar way, the brave Bhurishrava and Shalya arrived before Duryodhana, each with one separate akshouhini. With the forces of the Bhojas and the Andhakas, Hardikya Kritavarma went to Duryodhana with one akshouhini. Among those tigers among men, those soldiers, with garlands of wild flowers, looked like crazy elephants sporting in the forest. Among the others, there were those from Sindhu and Souvira,

with Jayadratha at the forefront. The lords of the earth arrived and seemed to make the mountains tremble. That large akshouhini of soldiers was resplendent, like many different kinds of rain clouds stirred by the wind. O lord of the earth! Sudakshina of Kamboja joined Kouravya with one akshouhini, together with the Yavanas and the Shakas.[119] Those soldiers looked like a swarm of locusts. Having joined Kouravya, they seemed to disappear.[120] Nila, resident of Mahishmati,[121] came with Nilayudha, and with the immensely valorous lords of the earth who lived in the southern regions. The two kings of Avanti,[122] surrounded by large forces, came to Suyodhana with one akshouhini each. The five brothers, who were kings of Kekaya and were tigers among men, came to Kouravya with one akshouhini and delighted him.[123] O bull among the Bharata lineage! From other directions, many other great-souled lords of the earth arrived and brought three more armies.[124] Thus, Duryodhana had eleven armies. They wished to fight with the Kounteyas and were covered with many flags. O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! There was no space left in Hastinapura then, not even for the foremost kings and the leaders of their armies. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The region of the five rivers,[125] Kurujangala,[126] the forest of Rohitaka,[127] the entire desert region, Ahichhatra,[128] Kalakuta, the banks of the Ganga, Varana, Vatadhana and the mountains around the Yamuna—this entire region was extremely large and full of treasure and grain. It was completely covered by the forces of the Kouravas. This was the army that the priest, who had been sent by the king of the Panchalas to the Kouravas, saw.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Drupada's priest went to Kouravya. Together with Bhishma and Vidura, Dhritarashtra's son welcomed him with honours. He[129] asked them about their welfare and whether they were all in good health. In the midst of the leaders of the army, he then spoke the following words. "All of you know what the eternal dharma of kings is. But though it is known, I will refer to it, because it leads up to the words that I will say. It is known that Dhritarashtra and Pandu are sons of the same father. There is no doubt that they possess equal rights to what belonged to their ancestors. The sons of Dhritarashtra have now obtained those ancestral riches. Why have the sons of Pandu not obtained a share of the ancestral riches? This is the way it is. In earlier times too, it is known that the Pandavas did not obtain a share of the ancestral objects. The sons of Dhritarashtra gathered them. There have been several occasions when attempts have been made on their lives. But because their lives were not over, they could not be sent to Yama's abode. Through their own powers, the great-souled ones again obtained a kingdom. But together with Soubala, that was deceitfully taken away from them by the mean sons of Dhritarashtra. That act was undesirable, but this one[130] approved it. With their wife, these brave ones were terribly mistreated in the assembly hall. They went through many extremely terrible hardships in the forest. Then, in Virata's city, it was as

if they went through another birth.[131] These great-souled ones went through extreme difficulties, as if they had performed evil acts. Having left all that, and all the earlier difficulties, behind, the bulls among the Kurus[132] only wish for conciliation with the Kurus. Knowing their conduct and the conduct of Duryodhana, the well-wishers of Dhritarashtra's son should entreat with him. Those brave ones do not wish to fight with the Kurus. The Pandavas want what is theirs, without destroying the world. Whatever reasons Dhritarashtra's son cites in favour of a war, cannot be regarded as a reason, because they[133] are stronger. Dharma's son has assembled seven akshouhinis. They are eager to fight with the Kurus and are waiting for instructions. There are other tigers among men, who are equal to thousands of akshouhinis. There are Satyaki and Bhimasena and the extremely strong twins. These eleven armies are assembled on one side. But on the other side, there is the mighty-armed Dhananjaya, who possesses many forms. Just as Kiriti surpasses all armies, so does the mighty-armed and immensely radiant Vasudeva. Knowing the multitude of their armies, Kiriti's valour and Krishna's wisdom, which man will wish to fight? Since the stipulated time has passed, in accordance with dharma, you must return what should be returned. Do not let time pass by idly."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing his words, the immensely radiant Bhishma, aged in wisdom, applauded him and spoke these words, which were appropriate to the occasion. "It is fortunate that the Pandavas and their relatives are well. It is fortunate that they have allies now and it is fortunate that they are devoted to dharma. It is fortunate that those brothers, the descendants of the Kuru lineage, desire peace. It is fortunate that they, together with Damodara,[134] do not desire a war. There is no doubt that you have spoken the truth in every way. It is my view that because you are a brahmana, your words are too sharp. There is no doubt that the Pandavas went through hardships, here and in the forest. There is no doubt that, according to dharma, they have a claim on all their ancestral riches. Kiriti Partha is powerful. He is immensely strong and is skilled in the use of weapons. Who is there who can withstand Pandu's son, Dhananjaya, in battle? Even the wielder of the vajra cannot, how can other archers? It is my view that he can stand up against the three worlds."

'While Bhishma was still speaking these words, Karna glanced in Duryodhana's direction and angrily and insolently said, "O brahmana! What you have said is not unknown by any being in the world. What is the point of repeating it again and again? In earlier times, for Duryodhana's sake, Shakuni defeated Pandu's son, Yudhishthira, in the gambling match. He went to the forest for a stipulated time. Without that time being over, he now desires his ancestral kingdom back.[135] The king depends on the strength of the Matsyas and the Panchalas. O learned one! Duryodhana will not give up even one

foot of ground because of fear. But if it is according to dharma, he will hand over the entire earth, even to an enemy. If they desire the kingdom of their fathers and grandfathers again, they will again have to roam around in the forest for the time that had been sworn. Then they can approach Duryodhana's lap, without any reason for fear. Their present intentions are against dharma. This is plain stupidity. If the Pandavas forsake dharma and wish for a war, they will remember my words when they confront the best of the Kurus." Bhishma responded, "O Radheya! How can you speak? You should remember your own deeds, when Partha alone vanquished the six charioteers in battle.[136] If we do not act as this brahmana has spoken, we will certainly be killed on the field of battle and will have to eat dust." Dhritarashtra pleaded with Bhishma and placated him. He censured Radheya.

'He then spoke these words. "The words spoken by Shantanu's son, Bhishma, are for our own welfare, for the welfare of the Pandavas and for the entire universe. After reflecting about this, I will send Sanjaya to the Parthas. Therefore, you should now go back to the Pandavas without any delay." Kouravya[137] then treated him hospitably and sent him back to the Pandavas. Having summoned Sanjaya to the assembly hall, he spoke these words.'

Section Fifty

Sanjaya-Yana Parva

This section has 311 shlokas and eleven chapters.

Chapter 685(22): 39 shlokas
Chapter 686(23): 27 shlokas
Chapter 687(24): 10 shlokas
Chapter 688(25): 15 shlokas
Chapter 689(26): 28 shlokas
Chapter 690(27): 27 shlokas
Chapter 691(28): 14 shlokas
Chapter 692(29): 51 shlokas
Chapter 693(30): 47 shlokas
Chapter 694(31): 23 shlokas
Chapter 695(32): 30 shlokas

The word yana *means going or voyage. So this parva is about Sanjaya's journey as a messenger. Dhritarashtra sends Sanjaya as an emissary to the Pandavas. This mission doesn't succeed, though Krishna says that he will go as a messenger to the Kouravas. Yudhishthira asks for five villages (through Sanjaya). Sanjaya returns to Hastinapura.*

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'Dritarashtra said, "O Sanjaya! They have said that the sons of Pandu have reached Upaplavya. Go there and show homage to Ajatashatru and tell the unblemished one that it is fortunate that they have stationed themselves in that village. O Sanjaya! Honour them all, in words of conciliation. Say that they did not deserve the difficulties of dwelling in exile. Say they will soon be at peace with us. Though they have been falsely acted against, they retain affectionate feelings towards us. O Sanjaya! I have never seen any kind of falsehood on the part of the Pandavas. Having obtained all the riches through their own valour, the Pandavas offered them to me. Having scrutinized the Parthas for misdemeanours, I have never been able to find any sin in them. They have always performed tasks for dharma and artha, and not in pursuit of happiness, pleasure or desire. They have endured hot and cold, and hunger and thirst. They have controlled sleep, lassitude, anger and delight. They have overcome delusion with fortitude and wisdom. The Parthas have sought to obtain dharma and artha. When the time is right, they have given away riches to their friends. Even living together for a long time does not diminish their friendship. The Parthas honour with homage and riches those to whom these are due. In Ajamidha's lineage,[1] there is no one who hates the Parthas, except that evil, hateful and evil-minded Duryodhana and the even more inferior Karna. Those two engendered anger in those great-souled ones, when they tried to reduce their

pleasure and comfort. Duryodhana is used to pleasures and because his valour has increased, he thinks that he is in the right. As long as the Pandavas are alive, only a child can think that their share can be taken away.

'"Ajatashatru's footsteps are followed by Arjuna, Keshava, Vrikodara, Satyaki, Madri's two sons and all the Srinjayas.[2] It is better to give it to him than to fight. Savyasachi, the wielder of the Gandiva, is capable of subjugating the earth alone on his chariot. The unassailable and great-souled Keshava Vishnu is the lord of the three worlds. Which mortal man can stand before him? He is worthy of being honoured by all the gods. The shower of his arrows is like the roar of the clouds and they are as swift as locusts.[3] With a single chariot, the wielder of the Gandiva conquered the northern direction and the northern Kurus.[4] Savyasachi robbed them of their riches and forced the soldiers to follow and pay tribute. In Khandava, Savyasachi, the wielder of the Gandiva, defeated Indra and the gods.[5] Phalguna rendered the offerings to the fire god and increased the honour and the fame of the Pandavas. There is no one who is Bhima's equal in wielding the club, or his equal in riding an elephant. It is said that he is Arjuna's equal on the chariot and he has the valour of ten thousand elephants in the strength of his arms. He is well trained, skilled and swift. As an enemy, he will swiftly burn down the sons of Dhritarashtra. He is intolerant and powerful and even Vasava will be unable to defeat him in battle. Phalguna's brothers[6] have been taught well. They are extremely intelligent and strong and their arms are swift. Like vultures destroying a flock of birds, the sons of Madri will not leave any remnants among the Kurus. The swift Dhrishtadyumna is in their midst and he is regarded as one of the Pandavas. With his advisers, the joy of the Somakas[7] has devoted his soul for the victory of the Panadavas. The aged Virata, the lord of the Shalveyas,[8] is one with whom they have lived for a long time. He has opted for the Pandavas, together with his sons. I have heard that he is devoted to Yudhishthira. The five brave and spirited brothers, who are great archers, have been barred from Kekaya.[9] They desire to obtain the kingdom of Kekaya, and eager to fight, follow the Parthas. All the brave ones among the lords of the earth have been assembled for the sake of the Pandavas. I have heard that these brave ones are devoted to him.[10] With great affection, they have resorted to Dharmaraja. There are warriors who dwell in the mountainous passes on earth. They are pure and have been born in noble lineages. There are valorous *mlecchas*[11] with many weapons. They have single-mindedly assembled for the sake of the Pandavas. The limitless King Pandya is equal to Indra in battle. He is accompanied in battle by many warriors. He is valorous in this world and his energy cannot be countered. That great-souled one has arrived for the sake of the Pandavas. I have heard that Satyaki learnt about weapons from Drona, Arjuna, Vasudeva, Kripa and Bhishma and that he is an equal of Krishna's son.[12] He is also devoted to the cause of the Pandavas.

'"The Chedis and the Karushakas have also joined him, with all the enterprising lords

of the earth. In their midst, blazing in prosperity like the sun, used to be the flaming king of Chedi. He was regarded as unassailable in battle. In drawing the bow, he was foremost on earth. He was chief among the kshatriyas. But using his powerful force, Krishna crushed and killed him. In earlier times, he crushed Shishupala in battle, thus increasing the fame of the Yadavas. All the Indras among men, the kings of the Karushas, then increasingly extolled his honour. When Krishna rode on his chariot with Sugriva, they realized that Keshava was invincible.[13] They ran away, deserting the king of Chedi, like small animals at the sight of a lion. Whoever insolently wishes to engage in a duel with Vasudeva, is smitten down lifeless by Krishna, like a karnikara[14] struck down in a storm. O Sanjaya! O son of Gavalgana! On remembering what I have been told about Keshava's valour, undertaken for their[15] sake, and on remembering Vishnu's other deeds, I cannot find any peace. No enemy can withstand those who are led by that lion among Vrishnis. My heart trembles when I hear that the two Krishnas[16] are united on the same chariot. I hope my evil-minded son, whose intelligence is contrary, does not fall foul of them in a fight. O Sanjaya! Otherwise, they will burn down the Kurus, like Indra and Vishnu against the armies of the daityas. It is my view that Dhananjaya is Shakra's equal and the Vrishni warrior[17] is the eternal Vishnu. Kunti's spirited son, Pandava Ajatashatru, is humble and has sought refuge in dharma. The intelligent one has been deceived by Duryodhana. I hope that in his anger, he does not burn down the sons of Dhritarashtra.

'"I am not afraid of Arjuna, Vasudeva, Bhima or the twins, as much as I have always feared the flaming rage of that king. O suta![18] He is united with austerities and brahmacharya. Any resolution that he sets his mind on, is always successful. O Sanjaya! I am extremely terrified of his anger on the field of battle and I know that his cause is just. Therefore, swiftly depart on your chariot. Having gone to the abode of the king of Panchala, you must ask Ajatashatru about his welfare repeatedly, in words full of affection. O son![19] When you meet Janardana, immensely wise, brave and generous, on my instructions, you must ask him about his good health too. Say that Dhritarashtra wishes for peace with the Pandavas. O suta! There is no word of Vasudeva's that Kunti's son will not carry out. Krishna is as dear to them as their own selves. He is intelligent and is always attentive to their cause. On meeting the Pandavas, the Srinjayas, Janardana, Yuyudhana and Virata, on my instructions, you must ask about their health and also that of the five sons of Droupadi. O Sanjaya! At the right time, whatever you think should be said for the welfare of the Bharatas, say that in the midst of the kings, but do not say anything that incites them to the war."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing the words of King Dhritarashtra, Sanjaya went to Upaplavya to meet the infinitely energetic Pandavas. Having approached King

Yudhishthira, who had dharma in his soul, the son of the suta first bowed down before him. Sanjaya, Gavalgana's son, the son of the suta, then said, "O king! O Ajatashatru! It is fortunate that I see you healthy, with all your aides, who are the equals of the great Indra. The wise and aged King Dhritarashtra, Ambika's son, has asked about your health. Is Bhima, foremost among the Pandavas, well, and also Arjuna and Madri's two sons? How about the princess Krishna Droupadi, devoted to truth, the wife of warriors and the mother of sons? O descendant of the Bharata lineage! She is the spirited one for whom you offer sacrifices and wish for good fortune."

'Yudhishthira replied, "O son of Gavalgana! O Sanjaya! You are welcome. O suta! I am delighted and honour you. O learned one! Let me tell you that I am well and my younger brothers are also well. O suta! It has been a long time since I heard about the welfare of King Bharata, the aged one of the Kuru lineage![20] O Sanjaya! I am looking at you with delight, because I think that it is like looking at that Indra among men in person. Our grandfather is aged, intelligent, immensely wise and has all the qualities of dharma. O son![21] Is Kouravya Bhishma well? Does he conduct himself as he used to do earlier? Is the great-souled King Dhritarashtra, Vichitravirya's son, well, together with his sons? O son of a suta! Is Pratipa's son, the intelligent and great King Bahlika, well? O son! Are Somadatta, Bhurishrava, Satyasandha, Shala, Drona and his son and the brahmana Kripa, all great archers, well? Are they free from disease? O Sanjaya! They are the foremost archers on earth and all of them are on the side of the Kurus. They are immensely wise and are learned in all the sacred texts. They are foremost among archers on this earth. O son! Are they being treated with due honours? Are those wielders of bows free from disease? Drona's son, the handsome and great archer whose conduct is good, lives in that kingdom. O son! Is the immensely wise Prince Yuyutsu, the son of a vaishya, well?[22] O son! Is the adviser Karna well? He is the one whose advice the evil Suyodhana follows. O son! Are the aged ladies, the mothers of the Bharatas, the cooks and the wives of the servants well? How about the daughters-in-law, the sons, the nephews, the sisters and the sons of the daughters? Are they at peace? O son! Does the king continue to properly support the brahmanas, as he used to do earlier? O Sanjaya! I hope Dhritarashtra's sons have not discontinued what I used to give to the brahmanas. Does King Dhritarashtra, together with his sons, overlook the transgressions committed by brahmanas? He is the refuge. Does he overlook any shortages they confront in their livelihood? The creator has decreed this pure light in the world of the living for the welfare of all beings. If those evil ones do not restrain their avarice, there will be complete destruction for the Kouravas. Does King Dhritarashtra, together with his sons, make arrangements for the livelihood of the advisers? Are there ill-wishers, who dwell as well-wishers, and bring about dissension and ruin? O son! Do all the Kurus talk about the crimes committed by the Pandavas? When they see the masses of dasyus[23] assemble, do they remember Partha,[24] the foremost warrior? O son! Do they remember the

straight-flying and whirring arrows released from the string of the bow? Do they remember the roar of Gandiva? I have not seen anyone on earth who is Arjuna's equal or superior in battle. With a single stroke, he can release sixty-one sharp and well-shafted arrows that have been sharpened on stone. With the club in his hand, Bhimasena is spirited. He makes masses of his enemies tremble. He is like a rutting elephant that tears down a bed of reeds. Do they remember him? Sahadeva, Madri's son, vanquished the assembled Kalingas and Dantakura.[25] The immensely strong one fought with his left hand and his right. Do they remember him? O son of Gavalgana! O Sanjaya! You saw when I sent Nakula out and he brought the western direction under my sway.[26] Do they remember Madri's son? They were defeated in Dvaitavana, when they embarked on their ill-advised expedition with the cattle. The evil-minded ones were taken captive by the enemy and were freed by Bhimasena and Jaya.[27] I protected Arjuna from the rear and Bhimasena and the twins guarded his flanks. The wielder of the Gandiva defeated the enemies and was unhurt. Do they remember him? O Sanjaya! Through good deeds one cannot make everything all right. With all our souls, we have not been able to sway Dhritarashtra's son."'

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'Sanjaya said, "O Pandava! You have described what you are capable of. O foremost among the Kuru lineage! You have asked about the Kurus and the people. O father![28] O Partha! Those intelligent ones, the best of the Kurus that you have asked about, are well. O Pandava! Know that there are aged and virtuous men around Dhritrashtra's son, but there are evil ones too. Dhritarashtra's son has given to enemies. Why should he then take away the shares of brahmanas? If he follows adharma in his behaviour towards you, like injuring those who do not injure you, that would not be right. If Dhritarashtra, together with his sons, hates those who like you are righteous, that would not be right and would be like injuring one's friends. He does not approve of this and is extremely tormented. O Ajatashatru! The aged one is sorrowing. Having consulted with brahmanas, he has heard that hating one's friends is the most grievous of sins. O god among men! They remember you in their assemblies and Jishnu, the foremost among warriors, in battles. When there is the sound of drums and conch shells, they remember Bhimasena, who wields the club in his hand. In the midst of battle, they remember Madri's two sons, who advanced in all the directions, continuously showering arrows on soldiers. Those maharathas were never perturbed in battle. O king! I think that no one knows the destiny that will befall a man. O Pandava! You have all the qualities of dharma, yet you have had to confront difficulties in the form of hardships. O Ajatashatru! You have been able to overcome your hardships, and even greater ones, because of your wisdom. All the sons of Pandu are like the equals of Indra and will not deviate from dharma for the sake of desire. O Ajatashatru! With the aid of your wisdom,

you will be able to bring about the peace that will protect the sons of Dhritarashtra, the Pandavas, the Srinjayas and all the other kings who have gathered. O Ajatashatru! O king! Listen to the words your father Dhritarashtra told me in the night, when his advisers and his sons had gathered."'[29]

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'Yudhishthira said, "The Pandavas and the Srinjayas have assembled, together with Janaradana, Yuyudhana and Virata. O son of Gavalgana! O son of a suta! Tell us what Dhritarashtra has instructed you to say."

'Sanjaya said, "I show homage to Ajatashatru, Vrikodara, Dhananjaya, the sons of Madri, Shouri Vasudeva, Yuyudhana, Chekitana and Virata, and also to the aged lord of Panchala, Parshata Dhrishtadyumna and Yajnaseni.[30] All of you listen to my words, which I speak for the welfare of the Kurus. King Dhritarashtra welcomes peace. He has asked me to swiftly yoke my chariot. If the king,[31] his relatives, his brothers and his sons so desire, let the Pandavas find peace. The Parthas are endowed with all the qualities of dharma. They are steadfast, mild and upright. They have been born in a noble lineage and are non-violent and generous. They are restrained by shame and are determined in their deeds. Mean deeds do not befit you. O Bhimasenas![32] Such is your spirit. Any mean act by you would be glaring, like a spot of collyrium on a white garment. Who will knowingly commit an evil act that is seen to bring about complete destruction? That will be sin and will lead to devastation and hell. A victory obtained thus will be equal to a defeat. Blessed are those who act for their relatives. They are your sons, your well-wishers and your relatives. If prosperity can be ensured for the Kurus, they are prepared to give up their lives, which are of limited value, for your cause. O Parthas! If you subjugate the Kurus, and destroy and vanquish all your enemies, your being alive will be equal to being dead. It is not right that you should live after killing your kin. Who is capable of fighting with you, even if Indra and all the gods were to help? You have Keshava, Chekitana and Satyaki and are protected by Parshata's arms.[33] O king! But who can withstand in battle and vanquish the Kurus, protected by Drona, Bhishma, Ashvatthama, Shalya, Kripa and the others, and protected by Radheya and the other lords of the earth? The king who is Dhritarashtra's son has a large army. Who can withstand it, without being killed and destroyed? Therefore, I do not see the slightest welfare, either in victory, or in defeat. Why should the Parthas commit an act that is against dharma, like those born in low and inferior lineages? Therefore, I bow down and seek the favours of Vasudeva and the aged lord of Panchala. With hands joined in salutation, I seek refuge with you. How can there be safety for the Kurus and the Srinjayas? O Vasudeva! There is not a single one of your words that Dhananjaya will fail to follow. He will give up his life, if you were to ask him. O learned one! I am speaking to you, so that my objective is accomplished. The king,[34] with Bhishma at the

forefront, desires that there should be supreme peace amongst you.”’

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‘Yudhishthira said, “O Sanjaya! What words have you heard from me, desirous of fighting, that you are frightened of war? O son! The absence of war is superior to war. O suta! Having obtained that,[35] who goes to war? O Sanjaya! If all of a man’s desires are satisfied, without his having done anything, I know that he will never do anything.[36] There is nothing more foolish than going to war. Why should a man go to war, unless he has been cursed by destiny? The Parthas undertake tasks that bring about happiness, for the sake of dharma and the welfare of the world. He, who undertakes tasks for the sake of happiness, avoids difficult tasks that bring on unhappiness. He desires happiness and tries to avoid unhappiness.

‘“But one, who seeks to bring pleasure to his senses, is overcome by desire and torments his own body. Having become confounded, he confronts unhappiness. A fire that has been kindled becomes more energetic and stronger if more kindling is added. Thus, even if the objective has been attained, desire is not satisfied and is like a fire with clarified butter added to it. Look at the great abundance of objects of desire that the king who is Dhritarashtra’s son enjoys. Compare it with our diminished lot. He is not the lord of inferior beings. He does not hear the songs of inferior beings. He does not inhale the fragrance of inferior garlands. He does not use inferior unguents. He does not don inferior garments. Why have we then been banished from the land of the Kurus? Having thus driven us out, his heart is still consumed by the desire in his body. The king is himself partial and it is not proper that he should expect others to be impartial. The way one behaves towards others, is exactly reflected in the way others behave towards one’s own self. At the end of the cold season,[37] in the height of summer, one has kindled a fire in a dense forest with dry wood, so that it grows because of the wind. Having done this, one suffers when one tries to escape. O Sanjaya! Having obtained the prosperity, why does King Dhritarashtra lament now? He has always accepted the evil-minded advice of his evil son and his stupid advisers. Unworthy himself, Suyodhana flouted the good advice rendered by the trustworthy Vidura. Because of affection towards his son, King Dhritarashtra knowingly deviated from the path of dharma. He[38] is wise among the Kurus and wishes for the welfare of the Kurus. He is extremely learned, eloquent and of virtuous conduct. But out of affection for his son, King Dhritarashtra did not listen to Vidura. He[39] himself desires honour, but does not show honour. He is selfish and envious and transgresses dharma and artha for the sake of his own interests. He is ill-spoken and is overcome by intolerance. He is addicted to desire and his heart is evil. He is perverse and insults those who are superior. He seeks for revenge. He injures his friends. O Sanjaya! He is evil-minded. Out of affection for that son, King Dhritarashtra knowingly deviated from the objective of dharma. O Sanjaya! When gambling, it occurred to me

that the destruction of the Kurus might have arrived. Though Vidura spoke laudable and wise words, Dhritarashtra paid no attention to them. When they no longer followed the advice of Kshatta,[40] the Kurus started to face hardships. As long as they followed his wise advice, the kingdom continued to prosper. O suta! Now hear from me about the ones who advise Dhritarashtra's son. They are Duhshasana, Shakuni and the son of the suta.[41] O son of Gavalgana! Behold his stupidity.

'"Therefore, when I reflect on it, I do not see how there can be welfare for the Kurus and the Srinjayas. Dhritarashtra has usurped the wealth of others and has exiled the far-sighted Vidura.[42] Dhritarashtra and his son now aspire for a great kingdom on this earth, without any rivals. It is because of this that there cannot be any peace. They think that whatever is mine, should also be theirs. Karna thinks that it is possible to take up weapons against Arjuna in battle. There were many great battles in earlier times? Why was Karna not a source for recourse then?[43] Karna knows and so does Suyodhana, Drona knows and so does the grandfather,[44] and all the other Kurus also know that there is no wielder of the bow like Arjuna. All the Kurus know, and so do all the other assembled lords of the earth, that Duryodhana can perform evil acts only if Phalguna, the destroyer of enemies, is not present. Dhritarashtra's son thinks that he can take away the riches that I have gathered, from the Pandavas. Knowing these intentions, Kiriti will fight with a bow that is as long as a palm tree. The sons of Dhritarashtra survive as long as they have not heard the twang of the extended Gandiva. Overlooking the force of the angry Bhimasena, Suyodhana thinks that he has been successful in his objective. O son! Even Indra cannot take away my riches as long as Bhimasena is alive. O suta! There are Dhananjaya, Nakula and the brave Sahadeva too. O suta! The aged king, together with his son, should use his intelligence. O Sanjaya! Otherwise, the sons of Dhritarashtra will be consumed by the rage of the Pandavas in battle. You know the hardships that we have confronted. O Sanjaya! In your honour, I pardon them. You know what we have obtained earlier from the Kouravas and the conduct that we have shown towards Dhritarashtra's son. We will behave in the same way today. As you have said, we will strive for peace. Let me have my kingdom in Indraprastha. Let Suyodhana, foremost among the Bharatas, agree."'

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'Sanjaya said, "O Pandava! You have always based yourself on dharma. O Partha! That is famous in the world and can be seen. But this great flow of life is always transient. O Pandava! On noticing that, stay away from destruction. O Ajatashatru! If the Kurus refuse to return your share without a war, I think that it is better to be a beggar in the kingdoms of Andhaka and Vrishni than to obtain a kingdom through war. A man's life lasts for a short time. That flow is always subject to unhappiness and is unstable. Therefore, one should not shorten life. O Pandava! One should never resort to an evil

act. Desire is created in man. O Indra among men! This causes obstructions in the path of dharma. If a persevering man strikes it[46] down in advance, he obtains unparalleled praise in this world. O Partha! The thirst for riches is a bond. It ties one down from the pursuit of dharma. He who chooses dharma is enlightened. He, who strives for desire, is diminished because of that. O father! He, who places dharma at the forefront of all deeds, obtains great radiance, like the sun. A man, who diminishes dharma, may obtain the earth. But because of his evil intelligence, he will be ruined. You have studied the Vedas. You have followed brahmacharya. You have observed sacrifices. You have donated to brahmanas. You know about the supreme objective. You have given many of your years to pleasure. He, who devotes himself excessively to pleasure and does not perform deeds according to the practice of yoga, is extremely unhappy when his riches are exhausted. He is incited by the force of desire and is immersed in misery. In the same way, a foolish one, who abandons dharma and follows adharma in the pursuit of riches, does not believe in the hereafter. When he gives up his body, that evil one is burnt in the hereafter. The deeds that have been performed are not destroyed in the hereafter, be they good or be they evil. The good and evil deeds precede the doer. The doer only follows them from behind. Your deeds are as pure as the fragrant and succulent food offered with devotion to brahmanas and the stipends offered at sacrifices, in accordance with the proper rites. O Partha! Deeds are performed in this world. In the hereafter, there are no deeds to be performed. You have performed great deeds, applauded by righteous ones, for the sake of the hereafter. Death brings an end to old age and fear. There is no hunger or thirst, nor anything that causes unpleasantness. There is no deed that remains to be done, but for the satisfaction of the senses.

'"O Indra among men! Such are the fruits of our deeds. O Pandava! Do not bear the load of what is pleasing to the heart and arises out of anger or the pursuit of happiness. Do that which brings pleasure in both the worlds. After an act is over, there remains one's good name, truthfulness, self-control, honesty and non-violence. Horse-sacrifices, royal sacrifices and other sacrifices are evil deeds that transgress the limits.[47] O Parthas! After all this time, if you follow common norms and perform evil deeds, what was the reason for the Pandavas to spend many unhappy years in the forest, for the sake of observing dharma? You could have assembled an army without the exile. It was under your control earlier. The Panchalas have always been your advisers and Janardana and the brave Yuyudhana. That's also true of the king of Matsya, who rides a golden chariot, and his sons; and Virata, with his warrior sons; and the kings whom you had conquered earlier. All of them would have gathered to your side. With all these great aides and a powerful army, honoured by Vasudeva and Arjuna, you would have slain the best of warriors in the arena of battle. You would have destroyed the insolence of Dhritarashtra's son. Why did you increase the strength of your rivals? Why did you reduce the number of your aides? O Pandava! If you wished to fight, why did you dwell

for so many years in the forest and why have you picked the wrong time now? O Pandava! A foolish one desires to fight, or one who is unaware of dharma and deviates from the path that ensures welfare. Even a wise person, or one who knows about dharma, can deviate from the path of welfare because of anger. O Partha! But your intelligence is not fixed on adharma. Never have you committed an evil act out of anger. What is the reason for you to be attracted to a course of action that is counter to wisdom? O great king! Wrath is a bitter headache that does not result from disease. It destroys fame and gives rise to evil fruits. Unlike those who are sinful, those who are righteous should swallow it. Swallow your anger and be pacified. Who desires to be tied down by evil? Forgiveness is superior to pleasures, when the latter results from Shantanu's son, Bhishma, and Drona and his sons being slain. O Partha! Kripa, Shalya, Somadatta's son, Vikarna, Vivimshati, Karna, Duryodhana—having killed all these, tell me what kind of happiness you will obtain. O king! Having obtained the entire earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean, you will not be able to conquer old age and death, pleasure and displeasure, happiness and unhappiness. Knowing this, do not wage war. If you wish this because of the desires of your advisers, and it is because of them that you are about to err like this, then give everything to them and go away. Do not deviate from the path that leads you to the road followed by the gods."'

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'Yudhishthira said, "O Sanjaya! You have undoubtedly spoken the truth. As you have said, dharma is supreme among all deeds. O Sanjaya! But you should not censure me before you know whether I am following dharma or adharma. Adharma sometimes adopts the guise of dharma. And dharma sometimes appears as adharma. According to their intelligence, the learned ones distinguish between the two. When there is a calamity, depending on one's livelihood, dharma and adharma should be followed accordingly.[48] O Sanjaya! Know from me that in times of calamity, the pursuit of dharma often implies the first.[49] When one's natural means of livelihood has gone, one should strive to perform the duties that have been laid down. O Sanjaya! When the natural means of livelihood are present, both should be censured.[50] The creator has laid down a course of action for brahmanas who wish to remedy wrongs. O Sanjaya! When there is a time of calamity, those who do not act, or those who do not act correctly, are both reprehensible. According to livelihood, the right course of action has always been laid down, including for those who are not brahmanas and for those who do not follow the Vedas. It is only those righteous ones who can tell us what is best. This is the path that has been followed by our fathers earlier, and by our grandfathers and those who have preceded them. Those who are wise undertake these tasks and I do not think that this is the way of the unrighteous. O Sanjaya! Through the path of adharma, I do not crave whatever riches exist on this earth, whatever is with the thirty gods and beyond

them, in Prajapati's world, in heaven, or in Brahma's world. The learned Krishna is the lord of dharma. He is skilled and knows about the right policy. He is honoured by the brahmanas. In many ways, he has instructed many powerful kings like the Bhojas. The immensely famous Keshava must tell me whether I should be censured for giving up peace and following my own dharma of embarking on a fight.[51] Vasudeva wishes for the welfare of both sides. The Shinis, the Chaitrakas,[52] the Andhakas, the Varshneyas, the Bhojas, the Kukkuras[53] and the Srinjayas resort to Vasudeva's intelligence to subdue their enemies and delight their well-wishers. Led by Krishna, Ugrasena and all the others among the Vrishnis and the Andhakas are like the equals of Indra. They are intelligent and have truth as their valour. The immensely strong Yadavas are prosperous. Babhru, the king of Kashi, has obtained supreme prosperity after having obtained Krishna as a brother and an instructor.[54] Vasudeva satisfies all his desires, like a showering cloud brings satisfaction to beings after the summer. O son! This is the kind of person Keshava is. We know that he knows how to decide on a course of action. We are devoted to the virtuous Krishna. We will not transgress Keshava's words."'

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'Vasudeva said, "O Sanjaya! I desire that the Pandavas are not destroyed and that they are prosperous. I love them. O suta! In the same way, I desire the prosperity of King Dhritarashtra and his many sons. O Sanjaya! It has always been my desire that there should be peace between them and I have told them this. I hear that this is also desired by the king.[55] I think that this is also best for the Pandavas. O Sanjaya! Pandava[56] has already exhibited a kind of peacefulness that is extremely difficult to attain. Though Dhritarashtra and his sons are avaricious, there need not be any quarrel between them. O Sanjaya! You know the nature of dharma better than I do or Yudhishthira does. O Sanjaya! Why are you then finding fault with Pandava, who is endeavouring to accomplish his own duty? As is known, his conduct towards his relative has always been virtuous, right from the beginning. On the present issue, there is a difference of opinion among the brahmanas. Some say that deeds bring success in the hereafter. Others discard deeds and say that success comes from learning. It is known to brahmanas that those who have food, but fail to eat it, will remain hungry. It is only knowledge which leads to deeds that bears fruit, not other kinds.[57] Deeds can be seen to bear fruits. One who is thirsty is satisfied by drinking water.

'"O Sanjaya! Therefore, the rites of deeds have been laid down and it is deeds that circulate. Thus, I think that there is nothing superior to deeds. It is weak and vain to speak otherwise. Elsewhere,[58] the gods are radiant because of their deeds. It is because of deeds that the wind blows. Determining day and night through his deeds, the sun ceaselessly rises every day. Ceaselessly, the moon goes through fortnights and months, through nakshatras and conjunctions. The fire burns ceaselessly and through his deeds,

kindles for the welfare of beings. Through her strength, the goddess earth ceaselessly bears a heavy load. The rivers ceaselessly bear the waters that satisfy the wishes of all beings. The destroyer of Bala[59] has a lot of energy and ceaselessly showers down, resounding in the sky and in heaven. He ceaselessly practises brahmacharya, desiring to be the foremost among the gods. Shakra gave up happiness and his mind's desires. He became the foremost through his deeds. He steadfastly protects truth and dharma, with self-control, fortitude, equanimity and amiability. Cultivating all these, the foremost Maghavan obtained the kingdom of the gods. Brihaspati controlled his mind and restraining his soul in the proper fashion, followed brahmacharya. He gave up happiness and controlled his senses. He thus obtained praise and reverence from the gods.[60] The nakshatras shine because of their deeds. So do the Rudras, the Adityas, the Vasus, the Vishvas,[61] King Yama, Vaishravana Kubera, the gandharvas, the yakshas and the shining apsaras. The sages shine there[62] because they observe brahmacharya, study the Vedas and follow the rituals. You know this to be the dharma of all the worlds and for brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaishyas. You know what learned ones know.

'"O Sanjaya! Why are you then pleading for the Kouravas? Know that he is always devoted to the sacred texts and to *ashvamedha* and *rajasuya*.[63] He is also united with bows and armour, with arm guards, chariots and weapons. If the Parthas knew of some other means of accomplishing the objective, without slaughtering the Kouravas, whereby dharma could be saved and the purity of deeds preserved, they would force Bhimasena to follow the conduct of an arya.[64] But if they are engaged in deeds followed by their ancestors, and in the process, destiny makes them confront death, that death will be regarded as praiseworthy, because they will have accomplished their own deeds, to the best of their capacities. I think that you know everything and I would like to hear your response to a question. Is it better for a king to wage war in accordance with dharma, or is it better for him not to wage war in accordance with dharma? O Sanjaya! You must first consider the division into the four varnas and the deeds that are decreed for each. After having determined the duty of the Pandavas, you can then praise or censure it, according to your inclination. A brahmana must study, sacrifice, give, visit the sacred *tirthas*, teach, officiate for those who are fit to sacrifice and receive gifts that he knows he can accept. A king must protect his subjects, act in accordance with dharma, steadfastly give, perform sacrifices, study all the Vedas, take a wife and observe the sacred deeds of a householder. A vaishya must not study. He must steadfastly sustain agriculture, animal husbandry and trade, accumulate riches, do what is pleasant for brahmanas and kshatriyas and observe the conduct of dharma and the sacred deeds of a householder. The ancient dharma of shudras is known to be that he must serve and honour brahmanas. Both study and sacrifice are prohibited for him. He must ceaselessly ensure the welfare of all beings. The king must tirelessly protect all the varnas in the pursuit of their own dharma. He must not be addicted to desire and must be impartial

across all beings. He must never be addicted to desire that is adharma. If there is someone with all the qualities of dharma, he must acknowledge his superiority. He must chastise inferior subjects. If he acts in this fashion, he is virtuous. If he violently seizes land that belongs to others, intoxicated because of his powers, he angers destiny and this leads to strife between kings, creating armour, weapons and bows. For the task of killing dasyus, Indra created armour, weapons and bows. Whether riches are stolen secretly in private, or whether they are stolen forcibly in public, the two crimes are equally reprehensible. O Sanjaya! How is the act of Dhritarashtra's son different?

'"Overcome by intolerance and because of his avarice, he thinks that whatever he desires is dharma. The share of the Pandavas was determined. Why should we be robbed of those by others? If we are killed in battle, that will be praiseworthy. Inheritance is better than the conquest of another's kingdom.[65] O Sanjaya! In the midst of their kingdom,[66] recount this ancient dharma to the Kouravas. Those who have been assembled by Dhritarashtra's sons are stupid and evil and are under the control of death. Behold again the evil deed that the Kurus committed in the midst of their assembly hall. The illustrious Droupadi is the beloved wife of the Pandavas and she has virtuous conduct. With Bhishma at the forefront, the Kurus ignored it when she was seized by that lecher[67] and was forced to weep. If the Kurus who were assembled there, young and old, had tried to prevent it then, Dhritarashtra would have performed an act I would have approved of. This would have been a good deed for his sons too. Disregarding all norms, Duhshasana dragged Krishna to the midst of the assembly hall, with her fathers-in-law persent. Brought there, she was in a pitiable state, but found no protector other than Kshatta.[68] The kings in that assembly hall were such wretches that they were incapable of protesting. For the sake of dharma, Kshatta was the only one who spoke. Knowing dharma, he censured the one who possesses limited intelligence.[69] You did not speak of dharma in that assembly hall. But you see it fit to instruct the Pandavas now. However, when she was brought into that assembly hall, Krishna did perform a pure deed that was extremely difficult. Like a boat in the midst of the ocean, she freed herself and the Pandavas from that difficult situation.[70] When Krishna stood before her fathers-in-law in that assembly hall, the son of the suta[71] spoke to her. 'O Yajnaseni! You have no other recourse left. Go to Dhritarashtra's house. They have been defeated and are no longer your husbands. O beautiful one! Choose another man as your husband.' This was as heart-rending as a stake. They were extremely terrible and pierced the heart. Karna's words were like arrows that possessed great energy. They were embedded in Bibhatsu Phalguna's heart. When they donned garments that were made of black antelope skin, Duhshasana also spoke these harsh words. 'All of you are like sterile and destroyed sesamum seeds. You have been ruined and will go to heaven for a very long time.' Shakuni, the deceitful king of Gandhara, spoke to the Parthas at the time of gambling with the dice. 'Nakula has been won. What stake is left other than Krishna Yajnaseni?'[72]

O Sanjaya! You yourself know these reprehensible words that were spoken at the time of the gambling.

'"I wish to go there myself, to settle matters before there is a disaster. If I can bring peace to the Kurus, without sacrificing the interests of the Pandavas, I will accomplish a great and auspicious task. I will free the Kurus from the noose of death. I will speak words that are full of wisdom. They will be based on dharma and will be in conformity with the principles of non-violence. When I go there, I hope the Kurus honour me and the sons of Dhritarashtra listen to my words. If it is otherwise, Phalguna will ride on his chariot and Bhima will arm himself for war. Know that because of their own evil deeds, the wretched sons of Dhritarashtra will be burnt down. When the Pandavas were vanquished,[73] Dhritarashtra's son spoke many terrible words. Wielding a club in his hand, the enraged Bhimasena will remind Duryodhana about these at the right moment. The angry Suyodhana is a giant tree. Karna is the trunk and Shakuni constitutes the branches. Duhshasana is the abundance of flowers and fruit. The foolish King Dhritarashtra is the root. Yudhishthira is a giant tree that is full of dharma. Arjuna is the trunk and Bhimasena constitutes the branches. The sons of Madri constitute the abundance of flowers and fruit. The brahman and brahmanas constitute the root. King Dhritarashtra and his sons are the forest. O Sanjaya! The Pandavas are the tigers. Do not cut down the forest with its tigers. Do not banish the tigers from the forest. Without the forest, the tiger is killed. Without the tigers, the forest is cut down. Therefore, the tiger protects the forest and the forest sustains the tiger. O Sanjaya! Dhritarashtra's sons are like the creepers of dharma, but the Pandavas are shala trees. A creeper cannot grow without resorting to a large tree. The Parthas are positioned to serve, but those scorchers of enemies are also positioned, ready to fight. Let Dhritarashtra, lord of men, decide on what he has to do. The great-souled Pandavas are the followers of dharma and are positioned for peace. But they are capable of fighting. O learned one! Relate this accurately."'

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'Sanjaya said, "O god among gods among men! O Pandava! I will now take your leave and go. May you be fortunate. As a result of the distress in my mind, I hope I have not spoken words that should not be spoken and caused you distress. I am taking my leave of Janardana, Bhimasena, Arjuna, Madri's sons, Satyaki and Chekitana. May you be happy and prosperous. O kings! Look at me with eyes that are full of equanimity."

'Yudhishthira replied, "O Sanjaya! With our permission, depart in peace. You have not said anything unpleasant. They know, and all of us know, that when you speak in the midst of an assembly hall, you are pure in your soul. O Sanjaya! You were sent as an appropriate messenger. You are extremely dear to us. You have spoken words full of welfare and you have exhibited good conduct. O suta! Your views have not been clouded

by delusion. When we have spoken the truth, you have not been angered. You have not spoken harsh and piercing words. Nor have you spoken bitter and acerbic words. O suta! We know that your words are guided by dharma and artha and that they are full of meaning, not meant to hurt. For us, you are a beloved messenger. Vidura is the only other one who could have come here. In earlier times, we have seen you frequently. You are our friend, like Dhananjaya himself. O Sanjaya! Having quickly departed from here, serve the brahmanas who are deserving of worship. They are pure and brave and are devoted to the Vedas.[74] They have been born in noble lineages and have all the qualities of dharma. The brahmanas are devoted to studying and live on alms. There are ascetics who always live in the forest. Greet all the elders on my behalf. O raconteur! Ask about the welfare of each one.

'"You must meet King Dhritarashtra's priest, his preceptors and all his sacrificial priests.[75] O son![76] You must greet each one, as he deserves. O suta! You must meet each one and ask about his welfare. Our beloved preceptor[77] follows brahmacharya and the Vedas and never deviates from the right course of action. You must greet and honour Drona, as he deserves. He is the one who made the four techniques of weaponry known again.[78] You must swiftly go to Ashvatthama and ask about his welfare. He has studied and follows the Vedas.[79] He is the one who made the four techniques of weaponry known again. He is as swift as the son of a gandharva. You must then go to the abode of Sharadvat's son.[80] He is a maharatha and supreme among those who know about weapons. O Sanjaya! You must remember me repeatedly and touch Kripa's feet with your hand. You must also grasp the feet of Bhishma, supreme among the Kurus, and mention me to him. Valour, non-violence, austerities, wisdom, good conduct, learning and fortitude reside in him. O Sanjaya! You must salute the aged king[81] and tell him that I am well. He governs the Kurus with the sight of wisdom. He is extremely learned and the learned one tends to the aged.

'"O Sanjaya! Dhritarashtra's eldest son is evil, stupid, deceitful and prone to bad conduct. He now rules over the entire earth. O son![82] You must ask about Suyodhana's welfare. O Sanjaya! His younger brother is equally evil. He has always been like him in conduct.[83] He is a great archer and supreme among the Kuru warriors. O son![84] You must ask about Duhshasana's welfare. O son![85] You must ask about the welfare of the son of the vaishya.[86] He has never liked the idea of a war. He is immensely wise and has all the qualities of dharma. He is supreme among all wise ones and is never confused. O son![87] Ask about the welfare of Chitrasena.[88] He is unmatched in cutting and playing with dice.[89] He is extremely deceitful and is skilled in gambling and knows the heart of the dice. He is incapable of being defeated in duels with the dice. You must greet the learned bull of the Bahlika lineage, who has always had no other desire than that of there being peace among the Bharatas. He may happily greet me again, as he used to do earlier. It is my view that Somadatta must also be honoured. He is supreme among those

who possess all the qualities. He is learned and is never cruel. Because of his affection, he has always endured all the injury.[90] O Sanjaya! Somadatta's son[91] is the most venerable among the Kurus. He is our brother and friend. He is a great archer and supreme among charioteers. Ask him about his welfare and that of his advisers. There are other young ones who are chief among the Kurus. They are our sons, grandsons and brothers. If you meet them along the way, on my behalf, ask about their welfare. Dhritarashtra's son has assembled kings to fight against the Pandavas. There are the foremost among the Vasatis, the Shalvakas, the Kekayas, the Ambashthas and the Trigartas. There are brave ones from the east, the north, the south, the west and all the mountainous regions. They are non-violent and are proper in conduct. O son![92] Ask all of them about their welfare. There are those who ride on elephants, horses and chariots, infantry and large masses of aryas. Tell all of them that I am in good health. Ask all of them if they are in good health. There are advisers who have been appointed by the king. There are gatekeepers and others who lead the army. There are those who calculate revenue and expenditure. There are great ones who think about his[93] welfare. The king from the mountainous region of Gandhara, Shakuni, is unrivalled in cutting and playing with the dice. O suta! He heightens the honour of Dhritarashtra's son. O son![94] He is false in his intelligence. But ask him about his welfare. O son![95] Ask about Vaikartana's[96] welfare. He is unmatched in deluding the deluded. The Pandavas are impossible to vanquish. But alone, on a single chariot, that brave one hopes to defeat them. Ask about the welfare of the infinitely intelligent and far-sighted Vidura. He is devoted to us. He is our senior and our servant. He is our father, our mother and our well-wisher. He is our adviser.

'"O Sanjaya! The aged women who possess all the qualities are regarded by us like our mothers. Meet with all those aged women when they are assembled together, and on our behalf, show them honour. 'O those among you who have sons who are alive! Do your sons treat you properly and without violence?' O Sanjaya! Having said this, subsequently tell them that Ajatashatru and his sons are well.[97] O Sanjaya! There are those whom you know to be our wives.[98] O son![99] All of them should be asked about their welfare. 'Are you protected properly? Do you have fragrances? Are you uncensured and not distracted when you undertake the duties of the household? O fortunate ones! Do you behave properly towards your fathers-in-law? Are you well and are you treated without violence? Can you ensure your own conducts, so that your husbands remain devoted towards you?' O Sanjaya! There are those whom you know to be our daughters-in-law.[100] They have all the qualities and have been born in noble lineages. When you meet them, tell them that Yudhishthira has happily saluted those mothers of children. O Sanjaya! You must meet the maidens in their houses. On my behalf, you must ask them about their welfare and say, 'May you be fortunate and may you have husbands who are devoted to you. May you also be devoted to your husbands.' O son![101] You must ask

about the welfare of the courtesan women. 'Do you have ornaments, garments and fragrances? Are you happy and prosperous, without being frightened? Are your visits short? Are your words shorter?'[102] The sons of the servant maids, the servants of the Kurus, the many hunchbacked and crippled ones who have sought refuge, must be told that I am well. Ask how the worst among them fares. 'Do you continue to be engaged in your old pursuits? Does Dhritarashtra's son provide you objects of pleasure? There are those who have lost limbs, or are miserable, or dwarfs. Does Dhritarashtra's son treat you non-violently?' There are many who are blind and aged. There are many who have to earn a living through their hands. Tell them that I am well and ask how the worst among them fares. 'Do not be unhappy because of this sorry life. This must be because of sins committed in earlier lives. After subduing my enemies through the aid of my well-wishers, I will sustain you with garments and food. I used to provide stipends to brahmanas. I will provide more in the future. I will see all of you properly taken care of.' Tell the king[103] whatever you hear about their success. There are those who are unprotected, weak and always stupid, preoccupied with their own selves. They are miserable in every way. O son![104] You must ask about their welfare on my behalf.

'"O son of a suta! There are others who have sought refuge with Dhritarashtra's son, arriving from many directions. On seeing them, or anyone who is deserving of honour, ask if they are well in every way. There are those who have come and others who are arriving—kings and messengers from all the directions. O suta! Ask all of them about their welfare. Later, you should tell them that I am well. There are no warriors on earth who are equal to the ones Dhritarashtra's son has obtained. But dharma is eternal. And my dharma is that all immensely strong enemies must be destroyed. O Sanjaya! You must make Dhritarashtra's son, Suyodhana, listen to my final words. 'The heart in your body has a desire to rule the Kurus without any rivals. This has no rationale. We will not do anything that doesn't bring you pleasure. Give us our Shakrapura.[105] O foremost among the warriors of the Bharata lineage! Otherwise, be prepared to fight.'"'

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'Yudhishthira said, "O Sanjaya! The creator places the righteous, the unrighteous, the young, the old, the weak and the strong under his control. The lord grants learning to children and childishness to the learned. He grants all this when he provides the seed in a being. There is no need to tell you more. You will report it the way it actually is, now that we have cheerfully consulted each other. O son of Gavalgana! Go to the Kurus and show homage to the immensely strong Dhritarashtra. Touch his feet and ask about his welfare. When he is seated, surrounded by the Kurus, tell him, 'O king! It is through your valour that the Pandavas are living happily. O destroyer of enemies! It is through your favours that they obtained a kingdom while they were still young. After having established them in a kingdom first, do not destroy them by ignoring them now.' O

Sanjaya! No one should enjoy everything alone. 'O father! We will live together. Do not fall prey to enmity.' In the same way, lower your head in homage and recount my name to Shantanu's son, Bhishma, the grandfather of the Bharatas. After having greeted him, you should tell the grandfather, 'When Shantanu's lineage was drowning, you rescued it once.[106] O father![107] O grandfather! Act again in that fashion so that your grandsons live with affection among themselves.' You should speak in the same way to Vidura, the adviser to the Kurus. 'O peaceful one! O one who wishes for the welfare of Yudhishthira! Speak words of peace.'

'"Then you should repeatedly speak to the intolerant Prince Suyodhana, entreating him when he is seated in the midst of the Kurus. When Krishna was brought alone into the assembly hall, evil was done towards her. But we ignored it patiently, so that the Kurus might not be slaughtered. The Pandavas have borne hardships earlier and will do so again, though they are stronger now. All the Kurus know this. 'O peaceful one! You sent us into exile, with deerskin as our garments. We bore those miseries, so that the Kurus might not be slaughtered. When Duhshasana, with your approval, oppressed Krishna by the hair in the assembly hall, we overlooked that also. O scorcher of enemies! But we will fight for our rightful share now. O bull among men! Turn your mind away from avarice and from grasping the possessions of others. O king! Let there be peace and harmony amongst us. We wish for peace. Give us one province from your kingdom—Kushasthala, Vrikosthala, Asanti, Varanavata and whichever else you pick as the fifth and the last. O Suyodhana! Give five villages to the brothers.'[108] O Sanjaya! O immensely wise one! Let there be peace between us and our relatives. Let brother be united with brother, and let father be united with son. With smiles, let the Panchalas mingle with the Kurus. I desire to see the Kurus and the Panchalas uninjured. O son![109] O bull among the Bharata lineage! Let all of us live happily in peace. O Sanjaya! I am as ready for peace, as I am for war. For the sake of dharma and artha, I can be mild. But I can also be terrible."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'With the permission of Pandava, Sanjaya then departed, having carried out all the instructions of the great-souled Dhritarashtra. Having reached Hastinapura, he entered swiftly and reaching the inner quarters, told the gatekeeper, "O gatekeeper! Tell Dhritarashtra that I have returned after meeting the Pandavas. If he is awake, tell him that Kshatta[110] wishes to enter after the king knows about his return." The gatekeeper said, "O lord of the earth! I bow down before you. Sanjaya is here and is waiting at the gate, wishing to meet you. Your messenger has returned, after meeting the Pandavas. O king! Issue orders about what he should do." Dhritarashtra replied, "Tell him that I am well and am waiting for him. Let Sanjaya be welcome and let him enter. I have always been ready for him. Why is Kshatta waiting at the gate then?" With

the king's permission, the son of a suta entered the large palace that was protected by wise and brave aryas. The king who was Vichitravirya's son was seated on a throne and he joined his hands in salutation. Sanjaya said, "O lord of the earth! I am Sanjaya and I am bowing down before you. I have returned after meeting the Pandavas, gods among men. Yudhishthira, Pandu's intelligent son, has greeted you and has asked about your welfare. O king! He has affectionately asked about your sons and wishes to know if you are happy with your sons and grandsons, and with your well-wishers and advisers, and with all those who are earning a living through you." Dhritarashtra replied, "O son![111] O Sanjaya! I am greeting you on your return. Is Partha Ajatashatru happy? Is the king well with his sons, his advisers and the younger Kouravas?"[112]

'Sanjaya said, "Pandu's son is well with his advisers, even more than you had had known him earlier. The intelligent one does that which ensures dharma and artha. He is extremely learned, has foresight and follows good conduct. The non-violent Pandava is devoted to supreme dharma. He thinks that dharma is superior to riches. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Those who know him know that he will not follow happiness or pleasure that is against the norms of dharma. A man is controlled by others,[113] like a wooden puppet on a string. When I witness Pandava's hardships, I think that earlier karma[114] determines the destiny of beings. On seeing the taints of your deeds, with the evil it leads to and its terrible form, I think that as long as a man desires that which is right, a man obtains praise. Ajatashatru has given up evil, like a snake discards its useless skin. Having transferred sins to you, the brave Yudhishthira is resplendent in his conduct. O king! Learn how your deeds have harmed you. They are not united with dharma and artha and are not the conduct of aryas. O king! You have only obtained ill fame. That evil cannot be removed and will be with you in the hereafter. You have ignored them and have followed your son and wish to obtain an objective that is impossible to attain. The earth has loudly proclaimed that this is adharma. O foremost among those of the Bharata lineage! This was not an act that was worthy of you. One who is weak in intelligence, one who is born from an inferior lineage, one who is violent, one who remembers enmity for a long time, one who does not know about the conduct of kshatriyas and one who is weak in valour, such a person will not be able to overcome the disaster that adharma brings. One who is born in a noble lineage, one who follows dharma, one who is famous, one who is greatly learned, one who is in control of his soul and one who places dharma and artha over everything else, such a person lives happily. In no other way, can one overcome destiny. How can one who has intelligent advisers, who are well versed in the canons of dharma and artha, be foolish enough to commit such a violent act, as if one did not possess all the good counsel? These learned advisers have assembled together and have always advised about your tasks. They have arrived at the firm conviction that the hell that will wreak the destruction of the Kurus is imminent. The Kurus will be destroyed before their time, if

Ajatashatru counters the evil with evil and passes on the evil to you. There will be censure for you in this world. Was it not in accordance with the will of the gods that Partha set his eyes on the supreme world?[115] He ascended there, and was honoured. There is no doubt that this wasn't because of human action. In examining the qualities of deeds, that which has been and that which will be, King Bali came to the conclusion that the present was transient.[116] He decided that destiny was the root cause of everything. The eyes, the ears, the nose, the skin and the tongue—these are the sources of knowledge for beings. When the thirst has been quenched, these are content. Therefore, one should happily control them.[117] There are others who think that if performed well, a man's deeds take on forms of their own. The child is the outcome of the deeds of the mother and the father and in due course, grows through the intake of food. O king! One is subject to pleasant and unpleasant, happiness and unhappiness, censure and praise. One censures others for committing a crime and praises them for good conduct. I censure you for discord among the Bharatas. This will lead to the destruction of many beings. Because of the crimes of your deeds, the Kurus will be burnt up, like the one with the black form[118] burns up dry wood. O king! O Indra among kings! Among all those in this world, you alone have come under the control of the sons that were born to you. At the time of the gambling match, you praised the one whose soul was overtaken by desire. Now witness the calamity that has been brought down on him. O Indra among men! You accepted those who are unworthy. O king! You rejected those who are worthy. O Kouravya! You are now feeble and are incapable of protecting this extensive earth. I am exhausted from the speed of the chariot. O lion among men! I seek your permission to sleep. In the assembly hall tomorrow, the assembled Kurus will listen to the words that Ajatashatru has sent.'"

Section Fifty-One

Prajagara Parva

This section has 541 shlokas and nine chapters.

Chapter 696(33): 104 shlokas
Chapter 697(34): 83 shlokas
Chapter 698(35): 67 shlokas
Chapter 699(36): 72 shlokas
Chapter 700(37): 60 shlokas
Chapter 701(38): 44 shlokas
Chapter 702(39): 70 shlokas
Chapter 703(40): 30 shlokas
Chapter 704(41): 11 shlokas

Prajagara *means sleeplessness, lying awake at night. This parva is so named because Dhritarashtra cannot sleep at night. He still does not know Yudhishthira's message and summons Vidura. Vidura advises Dhritarashtra.*

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Vaishampayana said, 'The immensely wise Dhritarashtra, lord of the earth, told the gatekeeper, "I wish to see Vidura. Bring him here immediately." Having been sent by Dhritarashtra, the messenger told Kshatta,[1] "O immensely wise one! Our lord, the great king, wishes to see you." Having been thus addressed, Vidura went to the king's palace and said, "O gatekeeper! Inform Dhritarashtra that I am here." The gatekeeper said, "O Indra among kings! On your instructions, Vidura has arrived. He wishes to see your feet. Instruct me about what he should do." Dhritarashtra replied, "Allow the immensely wise and far-sighted Vidura to enter. I am always ready to see Vidura." The gatekeeper said, "O Kshatta! Enter the inner quarters of the wise and great king. The king has told me that he is always ready to see you." Vidura then entered Dhritarashtra's abode. He joined his hands in salutation and told the lord of men, who was immersed in thought, "O immensely wise one! I am Vidura and I have arrived here on your instructions. Please tell me if there is anything that I should do." Dhritarashtra said, "O Vidura! Sanjaya has returned. He has left after berating me. He will recount Ajatashatru's words in the midst of the assembly hall. I do not yet know the words that brave one among the Kurus[2] has addressed towards me. Therefore, my body is burning and I am suffering from sleeplessness. What do you think should be heard by someone who is awake and whose mind is burning? O son![3] Tell me. You are knowledgeable about dharma and artha. Ever since Sanjaya has returned after meeting the Pandavas, I am unable to obtain the peace of mind that I should. All my senses are distracted now. I am reflecting

about what he is going to say." Vidura replied, "If a weak one is attacked by a stronger enemy, if one's faculties are weak, if one has lost everything to a lecher or a thief, one is overcome by sleeplessness. O lord among men! It is certain that you have not been touched by these great calamities. Nor can you be tormented because you are covetous of the riches of others." Dhritarashtra said, "I wish to hear from you words about dharma and about that which leads to supreme welfare. In this lineage of *rajarshi*s, you are the only one who is regarded as wise."

'Vidura said, "One who does not serve that which is censured, is praised. He is not an atheist and has faith. These are the signs of one who is learned. One who does not deviate from his objective because of anger, joy, pride, false modesty and a false sense of vanity, is regarded as learned. One whose planned deeds and counsel are not known to others, but are known only after the tasks have been executed, is regarded as learned. He whose deeds are not obstructed by cold and heat, fear and affection, prosperity and adversity, is regarded as learned. One who wisely follows dharma and artha, and artha over kama for the sake of the hereafter, is regarded as learned. They exert to the best of their ability. They act to the best of their ability. They disregard nothing. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Such men are regarded as learned. He learns quickly. He listens patiently. He pursues the objective because of artha, not because of kama. If not asked, he does not dabble in the affairs of others. These are the first signs of a wise and learned one. They do not hanker after the unobtainable. They do not sorrow over what has been lost. They are not deluded in times of adversity. Such men are regarded as learned. He decides on a course of action and does not stop before the task has been accomplished. He does not waste time and is in control of his soul. Such a man is regarded as learned. They are attracted towards the tasks of aryas. They perform tasks that bring prosperity. They do not disregard that which ensures welfare. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Such ones are learned. He is not overjoyed because of honours. He is not tormented because of neglect. He is as undisturbed as a pond near the Ganga. Such a person is regarded as learned. He knows about the nature of all beings. He is familiar with the nature of all deeds. He knows the nature of men. Such a man is regarded as learned. He is skilled in words. He can talk about diverse subjects. He is quick to understand and possesses intellect. He can quickly explain what is in the texts. Such a man is regarded as learned. His wisdom facilitates his learning. His learning facilitates his wisdom. He does not transgress the norms laid down for aryas. Such a person obtains the appellation of a learned one.

'"If one is not learned and vain, if one is poor and proud, if one strives for artha without performing deeds, the learned regard such persons as stupid. He gives up his own objectives and tends to the objectives of others. He resorts to falsehood for the sake of his friends. Such a person is regarded as stupid. He desires that which should not be desired. He gives up those that should be desired. He hates those who are stronger. Such

a person is stupid in intelligence. He acts like a friend towards an enemy. He hates and harms those who are friends. He postpones tasks that should be performed. He procrastinates in every way. He takes a long time over something that should be done fast. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Such a person is stupid. He enters when he is not invited. He speakes a lot, even though he has not been asked. He trusts those who should not be trusted. He is worst among men and is stupid in his intelligence. Though he is the one who should be blamed, he is quick to blame others. He is angered, though he has no powers. Such a person is regarded as the most stupid among men. He ignores his own strength. He gives up dharma and artha. He wishes to obtain that which is unattainable, but without performing tasks. He is said to be stupid in his intelligence. O king! He instructs those who are not his pupils. He serves those who are hollow. He honours those who are ignoble. Such a person is known as stupid in intelligence. However, one who has obtained a great deal of riches, learning and power, and yet roams around without any show of pride, he is said to be learned. Who can be crueller than one who eats, lives and dons expensive garments alone, without sharing them with his servants? One person performs evil deeds, but the fruits are borne by many. Others enjoy, while the doer alone is blamed. A single arrow released by an archer may kill, or it may not kill. But when an intelligent person uses his intelligence,[4] it can destroy a kingdom, together with its king.

'"Having differentiated between the two[5] with the use of the one,[6] bring the three[7] under your control by using the four.[8] Conquer the five.[9] Know the six.[10] Stay away from the seven[11] and be happy. Poison kills one. Only one is killed with a weapon. But the disclosure of counsel destroys a kingdom and a king, with the subjects. One should not eat tasty food alone. One should not think only about one's own objectives. One should not travel alone. One should not be awake alone, when the others are asleep. There is one without a second.[12] O king! You have not been able to comprehend Him. He is the truth. He is the staircase to heaven. He is like a boat in the ocean. Those who are forgiving have one taint, and there is not a second one to be seen. People think that a forgiving one is incapable. There is one dharma that is supreme. Forgiveness alone brings supreme peace. Learning brings supreme satisfaction. Non-violence takes one to happiness.

'"The earth destroys two, like a snake destroys those who live in holes—a king who is not aggressive, and a brahmana who has not dwelt away from home.[13] Through two deeds, a man can be radiant in this world—by not speaking harsh words and by not requesting dishonourable ones. O tiger among men! There are two kinds of people who trust others—women who desire those who are desired,[14] and people who honour those who are honoured.[15] There are two sharp thorns that dry up the body—desire on the part of those who are poor, and anger on the part of those who are powerless. O king! There are two kinds of men who are established above heaven—powerful ones who are

forgiving, and generous ones who are poor. There are two kinds of abuse of property that has been acquired through rightful means—giving it to those who are unworthy, and not giving it to those who are worthy.

'"O bull among the Bharata lineage! It has been heard that there are three courses of action for men—inferior, medium and superior. This is known to those who are learned in the Vedas. O king! There are three kinds of men—inferior, medium and superior.[16] They should accordingly be employed in three different kinds of duties. O king! There are three who cannot own property—a wife, a slave and a son. Whatever riches they obtain, belongs to the one who owns them.

'"Those who are learned have said that a greatly strong king should avoid consultations with four—those who have limited intelligence, those who procrastinate, those who are lazy and those who are flatterers. O father![17] You have been blessed with fortune. While you are following the dharma of a householder, four kinds of people should dwell in your house—a relative who is aged, one who is born from a noble lineage but is in distress, a friend who is poor and a sister who does not have offspring. O great king! When he was asked by Indra of the thirty gods, Brihaspati said that four things bear instant fruit. Listen to them—the resolution of the gods, the intellect of the wise, the humility of the learned and the destruction of those who perform evil deeds.

'"O bull among the Bharata lineage! Men must carefully tend to five fires—the father, the mother, the fire, one's own self and the preceptor. Through worshipping five, one obtains fame in this world—gods, ancestors, men, mendicants and guests. There are five who follow, wherever you go—friends, enemies, those who are neutral, those you live on and those who are supported by you. On earth, if there is a hole in any of the five senses,[18] it is like wisdom draining out from the bottom of a water pot.

'"A man who desires prosperity must avoid six vices—sleep, drowsiness, fear, anger, laziness and procrastination. A man must avoid these six, like a broken boat in the ocean—a preceptor who does not teach, an officiating priest who has not studied, a king who does not protect, a wife who speaks unpleasantly, a cowherd who desires a village and a barber who desires the forest. There are six qualities that a man must never give up—truthfulness, generosity, endeavour, lack of jealousy, forgiveness and fortitude. He who always controls these six qualities within himself and has conquered his senses, is never touched by sin and is united with prosperity. There are six who live off six others and there isn't a seventh like this—thieves live on those who are careless, physicians on diseases, wayward women on lechers, priests on those who offer sacrifices, kings on those who quarrel and the learned always live on fools.

'"A king must always avoid addiction to seven vices. Otherwise, kings who have established themselves are often destroyed because of these—women, dicing, hunting, drinking, harsh words as the fifth, great severity of punishment and the abuse of wealth.

'"There are eight causes that lead to a man's destruction—first, hatred of brahmanas;

acting against brahmanas; acquiring the wealth of brahmanas; a desire to kill brahmanas; delight when they are censured; disapproval when they are praised; not remembering them when tasks have to be performed; and finding fault when they ask. Knowing these vices, a wise and learned man should avoid them. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! These are the eight that are the fresh butter of delight and are seen to provide happiness when they are present—union with friends, large inflows of wealth, the embrace of a son, sexual intercourse, pleasant conversation at the right time, high positions for one's allies, the attainment of desired objectives and honour in the assembly of men.

'"The abode has nine gates, three pillars and five witnesses. These are presided over by the soul.[19] The learned one who knows this is supreme among the wise.

'"O Dhritarashtra! There are ten who do not know dharma. Listen to who they are—the intoxicated, the deluded, the insane, those who are tired, those who are angry, those who are hungry, those who are hasty, those who are timid, those who are greedy and those who are driven by lust. These are the ten. Therefore, a learned one should avoid such sentiments.

'"On this, an ancient history is recounted, about what the Indra among the asuras, told Sudhanva for the welfare of his son.[20] 'The king who gives up desire and anger and donates riches to worthy ones is discriminating, learned and is quick to act. He is regarded as an authority by all the worlds. He knows how to make other men trust him. Once crimes have been established, he punishes with the staff. He knows his limits and is also forgiving. All prosperity descends on such a person. He does not think lightly of a weak enemy, but uses his intelligence to deal with him. He does not desire conflict with those who are strong. He exhibits valour when it is the right time and is wise. He is not distressed in a time of calamity. He perseveres in his efforts, without being distracted. In times of unhappiness, he conquers his soul. Such an eminent one triumphs over his enemies. He never remains away from home without a purpose. He does not have an alliance with the wicked, or consort with another person's wife. He is not insolent, or prone to thievery. He is not ungrateful, or addicted to liquor. A person who avoids these traits is always happy. He never strives extremely hard for objectives. When he is appealed to, he states the exact truth. He does not enter into a quarrel over a trifle. He is not stupid and is not angered when he is not honoured. He is not envious towards others. When he is weak, he does not enter into a feud. He does not speak too much and pardons a quarrel. Such a person is praised everywhere. He never dons the demeanour of the arrogant. He never speaks to others about his manliness. He does not utter harsh words in a moment of forgetfulness. People always look upon him affectionately. He does not revive enmity that has been pacified. He does not have excessive arrogance, or excessive humility. When faced with difficulties, he does not act out of anger. Such a person is regarded as supreme among those who follow arya codes of conduct. He is not

supremely delighted at his own happiness. He is not content at the unhappiness of others. After having donated, he does not repent later. Such a person is regarded as virtuous and arya in conduct. He wishes to know about the dharma and conduct of different countries and different races.[21] Wherever he goes, he always learns about the superior and the inferior. Such a person is regarded as a lord by great ones. He avoids insolence, delusion, jealousy, evil action, hatred against the king, ingratitude and historical enmity, and conversations with the drunk, the insane and the wicked. Such a person is regarded as foremost among wise ones. Self-control, purity, devotion to the gods, auspicious acts, penances, as laid down by many people—one who observes these daily rites, is honoured by the gods. He has a matrimonial alliance with an equal, and not with someone who is inferior. He has friendships and dealing and conversations with those who are equal. He places the possession of special qualities above everything else. He is wise and his conduct is in accordance with the best policy. He eats in moderation, after having shared with those who are dependent on him. He sleeps little, but performs a lot of tasks. If asked, he gives even to his enemies. Calamities never confront a person with a soul like that. The desires, intentions and motivations behind his deeds are never known to others. His counsels are kept secret. Such a person's objectives are never unfulfilled, not even by a trifle. He is engaged in the welfare of all beings. He is truthful, mild, generous and is pure in his sentiments. He is known among his relatives as a great gem. Such a man is ashamed of his own faults. He is revered by all the worlds as a preceptor. His energy is infinite. His mind is excellent and he is controlled. He is radiant in his energy, like the sun.'[22]

'"King Pandu was tormented by a curse. Five sons were born to him in the forest, the equals of five Indras. Under your supervision, those children grew up and were trained. O Ambika's son![23] They are now waiting to follow your instructions. O father![24] If you return their rightful kingdom back, you will be happy and rejoice with your sons. O Indra among men! Your intentions will no longer be questioned by gods and men."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "What should a tormented and sleepless person do? Tell me what you think is the right course of action. O son![25] Amongst us, you are skilled in knowledge of dharma and artha. O Vidura! Instruct me and tell me exactly. O one who is not weak in spirit! Use your wisdom to tell me what you think to be the best for Ajatashatru and tell me what you think to be the best for the Kurus. I am anxious about evil and can foresee evil. O learned one! Tell me completely and truthfully about everything that Ajatashatru desires."

'Vidura replied, "Even if one is not asked, one should speak to one whom one does not wish to see defeated—be it good or bad, hateful or pleasant. O king! Therefore, since I desire the welfare of the Kurus, I will tell you. I will speak words that ensure welfare

and are in accordance with dharma. Listen. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Do not set your mind on deeds that can only be attained through falsehood and inappropriate means. O king! If a deed undertaken correctly through appropriate means does not succeed, a learned one does not distress his mind over that. Deeds have consequences and one should duly reflect on a deed and its consequences. An act should not be undertaken in haste. Examining a deed and its consequences, and one's own capacity, a wise one decides whether an act should be done or should not be done. If he[26] does not know about the expanse of his kingdom, about how it can be extended, how it might decay, the treasury, population and punishments, his kingdom does not remain. One who remembers these measures and knows about dharma and artha, is one who retains the kingdom. Having obtained a kingdom, one should not become haughty, because haughtiness destroys prosperity, just as old age destroys physical beauty. Because it does not consider the consequences, a greedy fish goes by appearances and swallows an iron hook that is concealed in a dainty morsel. One who desires prosperity should consider what can be swallowed, whether it can be digested if swallowed, and whether it will ensure welfare if digested. If one plucks fruits that are not ripe from a tree, one does not obtain any juice from them. But then again, the seed is destroyed. If one obtains right fruit at the right time, one obtains juice from the fruit, and again fruit from the seed. Bees suck honey, but protect the flowers. In that way, one[27] should take riches from people, but without causing them violence. Flower can be collected after flower, but the root must not be severed. One should be like the maker of a garland in a grove and not like a burner of charcoal.[28] Think about an intended action. 'How will I gain from it? How will I gain if I don't do it?' Having thought in this way, a man should decide whether to do something, or not do it. There are acts that should not be undertaken, because the exertions spent on them will be fruitless. There are others that bring gain, require little effort and bring great gain. A wise man undertakes these swiftly and removes obstacles from these. If he[29] looks at everything in a straightforward way, as if he is drinking it with his eyes, his subjects love him, even if he is seated immobile and silent. When one looks favourably at the world in four ways—through sight, thoughts, speed and deeds—the world also looks upon one favourably. But if beings are frightened of him, like deer fear the hunter, he may obtain the earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean, but will still lose it.

'"One may obtain the kingdom of fathers and grandfathers through one's own energy. But if one uses inappropriate deeds, one can cause its destruction, like wind scattering the clouds. The earth is full of riches. It promotes and increases the prosperity of a king who follows the dharma followed by virtuous ones from the beginning. If one abandons dharma and resorts to adharma, the earth contracts, like a piece of leather inserted into fire. The efforts made to protect one's own kingdom should be similar to those that are made to destroy another one's kingdom. A kingdom should be obtained through dharma.

It should be protected through dharma. With dharma as the root, the kingdom will be prosperous and will not decay or be destroyed. One should look for substance in everything, the ravings of a lunatic or the crawling of an infant, like gold extracted from rock. A wise man collects good conduct, good speech and good deeds, like one who lives off ears of corn gathers them.[30] Cows see through their sense of smell. Brahmanas see through the Vedas. Kings see through spies. Ordinary people see through their eyes. A cow that is difficult to milk faces a great deal of discomfort. O king! But one that is easy to milk is not discomforted. That which is bent without heating, is not heated. The wood that is bent on its own is never heated. Because of this image, a wise one bends to one who is stronger. Bending before someone who is stronger is like bending before Indra himself. Animals are sustained by clouds,[31] kings by their friends and relatives. Husbands are the relatives of wives. The Vedas are the relatives of brahmanas. Dharma is sustained through truth. Learning is sustained through yoga. Beauty is sustained through ablutions. Lineage is sustained through conduct. Grain is sustained through it being measured. Horses are sustained through exercise and cows through constant supervision. Women are sustained through bodices.[32]

'"It is my view that if there is inferior conduct, noble lineage signifies nothing. Good conduct stands out, especially among one who is low-born. He who is envious of another one's riches, beauty, valour, lineage, happiness, fortune and honour, suffers from a disease that has no cure. If one is frightened of doing the wrong thing, not doing the right thing, or of one's counsel being disclosed at the wrong time, this is like getting intoxicated on liquor. Those who are prone to intoxication get drunk because of knowledge, get drunk because of riches, and as a third reason, get drunk because of noble birth. But the virtuous are strong because they control such intoxication. If those who are virtuous ask those who are not virtuous for a small favour, those who are not virtuous think that they have come to be regarded as virtuous. The soul is the refuge of the virtuous. The virtuous are the refuge of the virtuous. The virtuous are the refuge of those who are not virtuous. But those who are not virtuous are never the refuge of those who are virtuous. A well-dressed one triumphs in an assembly, a possessor of cattle triumphs in a congregation. One with a vehicle triumphs over a road. One with good conduct triumphs everywhere. Good conduct is most important in a man. If that is destroyed, there is nothing to be gained from life, riches, wealth or relatives. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Meat is the supreme dish for the rich, cow's milk for those who are in the middle and salt for those who are poor. But the poor always have the best of food. Their hunger generates succulence in the food, extremely rare among those who are opulent. Those who are rich in the world have no capacity to eat. O Indra among kings! But the poor digest pieces of wood. Those who are inferior fear a loss in livelihood and those who are in the middle fear death. The greatest fear for those who are supreme on earth is disrespect. The evil intoxication with riches is worse than

intoxication with liquor and similar objects. He who is intoxicated with riches does not come to his senses until he confronts a downfall. In this world, men are obsessed with their senses, unless they control the objects of their senses, just as the nakshatras are tormented by the planets. For one who is conquered by attraction towards the natural five senses, calamities increase, like the moon waxing during *shuklapaksha*. One who wishes to conquer his advisers without conquering himself and one who wishes to conquer his enemies without conquering his advisers are eventually destroyed. He who first conquers his soul, as it is in the form of a country, will certainly conquer his advisers and his enemies. He who controls his senses, conquers his advisers, wields his staff against those who cause offence, acts with deliberation and is patient, is blessed with prosperity.

'"O king! A man's body is like a chariot. The soul is the charioteer and the senses are the horses. When those excellent horses are skilfully controlled, the patient charioteer is happy. When they[33] are not controlled, that leads to destruction, just as uncontrolled and untrained horses bring calamity to a charioteer on the road. One who is foolish is guided by his senses. He sees good where there is evil and evil where there is good. He thinks that unhappiness is happiness. If one gives up dharma and artha and comes under the control of the senses, one swiftly decays and loses prosperity, life, riches and wife. One who owns riches but is himself owned by the senses, is dislodged from this riches because he is conquered by his senses. One should seek to know the soul, with the mind, the intelligence and the senses controlled. The soul is one's friend and the soul is also one's enemy. O king! Desire and anger are like two large fish that are caught in a small net and lead to the destruction of wisdom. If one considers dharma and artha before accumulating possessions, then having obtained the possessions, one is always happy. He who does not conquer the five inner enemies[34] that lead to the destruction of intelligence, but wishes to conquer other enemies, is subjugated by his enemies. It can be seen that great-souled kings are killed through their own deeds, because they have not been able to control their senses and because they lust for other kingdoms. Those who commit sin and those who do not commit sin receive equal punishment if they consort with each other, just as wet kindling burns when it is mixed with the dry. Therefore, one should never ally with the wicked. A man who is deluded and does control the five enemies and their five needs, is swallowed by disaster. Lack of malice, uprightness, purity, contentment, pleasant speech, self-control and truthfulness are not the attributes of those who are evil in their souls. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Those who are inferior are not characterized by knowledge of the soul, steadfastness, patience, constant adherence to dharma, carefulness in speech and generosity. Those who are stupid try to cause injury to the wise through anger and slander. The speaker[35] bears the guilt, but one who forgives is freed. Violence is the strength of the evil and decreed punishment is the strength of kings. Service is the strength of women. Forgiveness is the

strength of those who possess qualities.

'"O king! It has been thought that control of speech is the most difficult. It is not possible to speak wisely and copiously on many and varied subjects. Words spoken well bring many benefits. O king! In the same way, words spoken ill bring many evils. A forest pierced by arrows or cut down by axes grows again. But a terrible wound caused by harsh speech is never healed. Shafted arrows, hollow arrows and iron arrows can be plucked out from a body. But it is impossible to uproot the stakes of words from the heart. The arrows of words are released from the mouth. Pierced by these, one sorrows night and day. They descend on the weak spots of others. Therefore, learned ones do not release these on others. When the gods wish to vanquish a man, they distract his intelligence and they see right in what is wrong. The intelligence is tainted and destruction is nigh. Wrong, in the appearance of right, is not removed from his heart. O bull among the Bharata lineage! That clouded intelligence has now overcome your sons because of their enmity towards the Pandavas, and you do not know this. O Dhritarasthra! Yudhishthira has all the auspicious marks and is fit to rule the three worlds. He is your pupil and should reign. Even more than all your sons, he has been honoured by fortune. He has energy and wisdom and knows about the nature of dharma and artha. O Indra among kings! He is supreme among those who uphold dharma and because of his compassion and non-violence, and because of his respect towards you, he has undergone many hardships."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "O immensely intelligent one! Yet again, tell me words that are full of dharma and artha. I am not satisfied from listening to your varied words."

'Vidura replied, "It is probably the case that bathing in all the tirthas and kindness towards all beings are equal. But perhaps kindness is superior. O lord! Always be kind towards your sons. You will obtain supreme fame here and in heaven after your death. O tiger among men! As long as a man's pure deeds are recounted in this world, he obtains greatness in the world of heaven. On this, the ancient history of the conversation between Virochana and Sudhanva, over Keshini, is cited.

'"Keshini asked,[36] 'O Virochana! Are brahmanas or the sons of Diti superior? With whom should Sudhanva not be seated on the couch?'

'"Virochana replied, 'O Keshini! We are the descendants of Prajapati and are the supreme among beings. This entire world belongs to us. Who are the gods and who are the brahmanas?'

'"Keshini said, 'O Virochana! Be seated here and we will await Sudhanva's arrival in the morning. I will see both of you together in this pavilion.'

'"Virochana replied, 'O fortunate one! O timid one! I will do as you say. In the morning, you will see me and Sudhanva together.'

'"Sudhanva said,[37] 'O son of Prahlada! I cannot touch that golden seat occupied by you. I will then descend to the same level as you and I cannot be seated with you.'

'"Virochana replied, 'O Sudhanva! You deserve a wooden plank, a handful of *kusha* grass or a cushion made of grass. You do not deserve to sit on the same seat as I.'

'"Sudhanva said, 'Even your father honours me and sits below me when we are seated together. You are a child reared in happiness at home and do not know anything.'

'"Virochana replied, 'O Sudhanva! I am offering gold, cows, horses and all the other riches that we asuras possess, as a stake. Let us put the question to those who know.'

'"Sudhanva said, 'O Virochana! Forget your gold, cows and horses. Let us stake our lives and put the question to those who know.'

'"Virochana replied, 'Having staked our lives, where will we go? I will not stand before the gods, nor before men.'

'"Sudhanva said, 'After having staked our lives, we will go to your father. Prahlada will not utter a falsehood, even for the sake of his son.'

'"Prahlada said, 'These two have never been together before and have now appeared together. They are arriving by the same road, like two angry serpents. You have never travelled together before. O Virochana! How is it that you are travelling together now? I am asking you about your friendship with Sudhanva.'

'"Virochana replied, 'There is no friendship between me and Sudhanva. We have staked our lives. O Prahlada! I am asking you a question. Please do not utter a falsehood.'

'"Prahlada said, 'Let water and *madhuparka*[38] be brought for Sudhanva. O brahmana! You deserve to be honoured by me. A fat and white cow has been prepared for you.'

'"Sudhanva replied, 'Water and madhuparka have been offered to me on the way. O Prahlada! Answer the question that we are asking you.'

'"Prahlada said, 'O brahmana! You are like another son who is standing before me as a witness. When the two of you are debating a question, who am I to say anything about it? O Sudhanva! I am asking you a question. Where does the false witness, who neither speaks the truth nor lies, spend the night?'

'"Sudhanva replied, 'A false witness spends the night like a woman ignored,[39] like one who has been defeated in gambling, or like one whose limbs are exhausted from carrying a load. A false witness spends the night like someone who is debarred from the city and remains hungry outside the gates, where he always sees many enemies. A lie for the sake of an animal implies that five are killed.[40] A lie for the sake of a cow implies that ten are killed. A lie for the sake of a horse implies that one hundred are killed. A lie for the sake of a man implies that one thousand are killed. A lie for the sake of gold implies that those who have been born, and those who are yet to be born, are killed. A lie for the sake of land implies that everything is killed. Therefore, do not lie for the sake of land.'

'"'Prahlada said, 'O Virochana! Angiras is superior to me and Sudhanva is superior to you. His mother is superior to your mother. Therefore, you have been won by him. O Virochana! This Sudhanva now owns your life. O Sudhanva! I desire that you should give it[41] back to Virochana.'

'"'Sudhanva replied, 'O Prahlada! Since you have adhered to dharma and have not uttered a falsehood out of affection, I will give you this rare present of a son. O Prahlada! Virochana, this son of yours, has been given by me to you. He should wash my feet before the maiden.'"

'Vidura said, "O Indra among kings! Therefore, you should not utter a falsehood for the sake of land. By deviating for the sake of your son, do not head towards destruction with your sons and your advisers. The gods do not protect with a staff, like herdsmen looking after animals. They give wisdom to those they wish to protect. There is no doubt that a man obtains success to the extent that he sets his mind on doing that which is good. Hymns do not save from calamities one who resorts to illusion and deceit. When the time for destruction arrives, hymns desert him, like birds who have grown wings leaving a nest. It is said that one should discard intoxicating liquor, quarrels that are extensive and with many, discord between the husband and the wife, dissension among relatives, hatred towards the king, disputes between women and men and a road that is wrong. There are seven who should not be summoned as witnesses—a palmist,[42] a trader who has been a thief earlier, a skilled fowler, a physician, an enemy, a friend and an actor.[43] An agnihotra performed out of pride, silence that is based on pride, studying that is done out of pride and sacrifices performed out of pride—these are four things that are not fearful. But they become fearful when they are performed inappropriately. An arsonist, a poisoner, a pimp,[44] a seller of soma, one who makes arrows, a soothsayer, one who injures friends, one who consorts with another's wife, an abortionist, one who violates his preceptor's bed, a brahmana who drinks liquor, one who is unnecessarily harsh in use of words, a base person, an atheist, one who criticizes the Vedas, a bribe-taker, an outcast, one who is niggardly despite possessing riches and one who injures when asked for protection—these are the equals of those of who kill brahmanas. Gold is tested in a fire made of straw, one who is noble through the yoke that he bears, a virtuous man through his conduct, a brave one at the time of fear, a patient one when confronted with calamity and well-wishers and enemies in times of great hardship. Old age destroys beauty, hope destroys steadfastness, death destroys life, jealousy destroys dharma, anger destroys prosperity, association with the ignoble destroys conduct, lust destroys modesty and vanity destroys everything. Prosperity arises from auspicious roots. It increases because of strong action. Its roots are based on skill. It is based on self-control.

'"There are eight qualities that illuminate a man—wisdom, noble birth, self-control, learning, valour, restraint in speech, generosity according to capacity and gratitude. O

father![45] These are great qualities, but there is one quality that gathers them together. When a king honours a man, that quality shines over all the other qualities. O king! In the world of men, these eight are regarded as the signs of attainment of heaven. Of these, four are innate qualities of the virtuous and the other four are qualities pursued by the virtuous. Sacrifices, generosity with gifts, studying and austerities are innate qualities of the virtuous. Self-control, truthfulness, uprightness and non-violence are the four qualities pursued by the virtuous. There is no assembly where there are no elders. They are not elders if they do not speak about dharma. There is no dharma where there is no truth. There is no truth when there is immersion in falsehood. Truth, beauty, learning, knowledge, noble birth, good conduct, strength, riches, valour and eloquence of speech—these ten ensure good social relationships. An evil man performs evil action and reaps evil fruits. A good man performs good action and reaps good fruits. Evil acts, when performed again and again, destroy wisdom. A man whose wisdom has been destroyed, always performs evil deeds. The wisdom of a man, who repeatedly performs good deeds, prospers. When wisdom prospers, a man always performs good deeds. A man who is envious, a man who is malicious, a man who is cruel and a man who always makes enemies out of others, will quickly confront great hardships, as they follow their evil ways. A man who is without envy, a man who is accomplished in wisdom and a man who always follows good conduct, never confronts great hardships and is lustrous everywhere. He who learns wisdom from a wise one is learned. He obtains dharma and artha through his wisdom and can strive towards happiness. During the day, he should act so that he can sleep happily at night. He should act during the eight months so that he can live during the monsoons happily.[46] During the young years, one should act so that one can live happily in old age. Throughout one's life, one should act so that one can live happily in the afterlife. People speak well of food that has been digested, a wife whose youth has passed, a warrior who is beyond battles and an ascetic who has crossed over to the other side.[47] If one tries to cover up a hole with riches that have been obtained through adharma, it will remain uncovered and another will surface elsewhere. The preceptor controls those who control their souls. The king controls evil-souled ones. Vaivasvata Yama controls those who sin secretly. The powers of rishis, rivers, those born in noble lineages and great-souled ones cannot be recovered,[48] nor those of women and those who are evil in conduct. O king! One who worships brahmanas, one who is generous, one who is liberal towards his relatives and a kshatriya who looks towards heaven, rule the earth for a long time. The brave, the learned and those who know how to serve—these are the three kinds of men who pluck golden flowers from the earth. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Deeds performed through intelligence are the best, those performed with the arms are medium, and those performed by bearing loads with the thighs are the worst.

'"Duryodhana and Shakuni are stupid, and Duhshasana is also like that. So is Karna.

Having entrusted your riches to them, how can you hope to thrive? O bull among the Bharata lineage! The Pandavas possess all the qualities. They look upon you as a father. Treat them like sons."'

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'Vidura said, "In this connection, we have heard the ancient history of the conversation between Atreya and the Sadhyas quoted. The maharshi,[49] rigid in his vows, was roaming around in the form of a swan. In ancient times, the gods, the Sadhyas, asked the immensely wise one. 'O maharshi! We are the gods known as the Sadhyas. We can see you, but we are unable to understand who you are. It is our view that you are learned, steadfast and intelligent. Tell us great words that are full of wisdom.'

'"The swan replied, 'O immortals! I have heard that one's task is to be steady, self-controlled, truthful and devoted to dharma. Having loosened all the knots of one's heart, one should equally control that which is pleasant and that which is unpleasant. When one is reviled, one should not revile in return. One should endure it. This torments the one who reviles and you enjoy the fruits of his good deeds. Do not revile. Do not insult an enemy. Do not quarrel with friends, or serve those who are inferior. Do not be vain. Do not be inferior in conduct. Avoid harsh words and those that come from anger. Terrible words pierce the innards, the bones and the hearts of men and burn them. Therefore, one must avoid harsh and angry words. One who seeks delight in dharma, must always avoid them. If one hurts men with harsh and scathing words, words that are like wounding thorns to men, such an unfortunate person bears death and misery on his face. When an enemy strikes with extremely sharp arrows that burn like the fire and the sun, and though pierced one withstands it, a wise one knows that the fruits of the good deeds of the other one[50] devolve on him. If one serves a virtuous man or one who is not virtuous, an ascetic or a thief, just as garments are coloured by dyes, one is accordingly coloured by one's associates. If one does not revile in return when one is reviled and does not make others revile, if one does not strike back in return when one is struck and does not make others strike, if one does not wish to injure an assailant, the gods wish for the association and arrival of such a person. First, it is better not to speak than to speak. Second, if one speaks, one should speak the truth. Third, if one speaks, one should say that which is pleasant. Fourth, if one speaks pleasant truth, it should be in accordance with dharma. A man becomes like the one he converses with, like the one he serves, and like the one he wishes to be. One becomes free of whatever one keeps oneself away from. By turning away from everything, the least bit of unhappiness vanishes. Such a person is not vanquished, nor does he wish to vanquish others. He has no enmity, nor does he strike back. He is equally disposed towards praise and blame. He does not sorrow and he does not rejoice. He wishes for the welfare of everyone and his mind does not harbour ill will towards anyone. He is truthful, mild and self-controlled.

Such a man is superior. One who does not placate without reason, one who gives what he has promised and one who knows good deeds and bad ones—such a man is medium. He who is difficult to control, he who strikes back instead of being instructed, he who cannot control himself when overcome by anger, he who is ungrateful, he who is without friends and evil-souled—these are the signs of a worst man. He does not appreciate the good things done by others. He is distrustful of himself. He drives away his friends. Such a man is the worst. If one desires prosperity for one's own self, one must serve superior men and medium ones at the right time. But one must never serve the worst. Riches can be obtained through force, constant endeavour, wisdom and manliness. But this still does not warrant complete praise, or the conduct that characterizes those born in great lineages."

'Dhritarashtra asked, "The gods desire those who have been born in great lineages, those who are extremely learned and are always devoted to dharma and artha. O Vidura! I have a question to ask you. What makes a lineage great?"

'Vidura replied, "Great lineages of appropriate conduct are those in which seven qualities are resident—austerity, self-control, knowledge of the brahman, sacrifices, purity, marriages and constant donation of food. They do not deviate from good conduct, nor do their descendants suffer. They practise dharma through good conduct. They desire to distinguish their lineages through deeds. They discard falsehood. Such are great lineages. Through the non-performance of sacrifices, through bad marriages, through neglect of the Vedas and through transgression of dharma, lineages degenerate. By destroying what is due to the gods, by stealing the property of brahmanas and by causing offence to brahmanas, lineages degenerate. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! By oppressing brahmanas and speaking ill of them and by stealing what has been entrusted to them, lineages degenerate. Lineages that own cattle, men and horses are not reckoned as foremost lineages if they are inferior in conduct. Lineages that are deficient in riches, but are good in conduct, accumulate great fame, and are reckoned as the foremost of lineages. Let no one in our lineage engender enmity. Let no one who is an adviser to the king steal someone else's property, exhibit enmity towards friends, indulge in falsehood or deceit and eat before the ancestors, the gods and the guests. No one who kills a brahmana, no one who hates a brahmana and no one who causes an obstruction to agriculture should have an association with us. A seat made of straw, a place on the floor, water and sweet words as the fourth, are never lacking in the homes of the good. O king! O immensely wise one! Those who observe good conduct and are pure in their deeds and devoted to dharma, offer these with complete devotion to others. O king! Even though it is thin, a *syandana* tree[51] can bear loads that other larger trees cannot. Thus, those born in great lineages can bear great burdens that other men cannot.

'"He whose anger engenders fear, is not a friend. He who has to be served with

anxiety, is not a friend. He is a friend who can be trusted like a father. Others are friends only by association. If someone is not a relative, but acts through friendly sentiments, he is a relative, a friend, a refuge and a protector. A man who is fickle in his mind and does not serve the elders, if his disposition is changing and is not constant, it will be difficult for him to collect friends. Prosperity deserts those who are fickle in their minds, those who are not in control of their souls and those who are under the control of their senses, just as swans desert a dry lake. Sudden anger and pacification without reason are not the signs of those who have good conduct, like clouds that are not constant. There are those who are served by their friends, but are ungrateful and do not treat them well. Even predatory beasts do not touch their corpses. Whether one is rich or poor, one must always ask favours from friends. Without asking, one does not know whether the friends are deep or shallow. Grief destroys beauty. Grief destroys strength. Grief destroys knowledge. Grief brings on disease. Nothing is gained through sorrow, only the body is tormented. This only delights the enemies. Therefore, do not sorrow in your mind.

'"Man dies and is born again and again. Man withers and grows again and again. Man asks, and is asked, again and again. Man grieves, and is grieved over, again and again. Happiness and unhappiness, prosperity and adversity, gain and loss, death and life—all of these touch everyone by turn. Therefore, a wise person neither rejoices, nor grieves. The six senses[52] are not constant. Wherever one of them increases disproportionately, the intelligence oozes out, like water from a pot with holes."

'Dhritarashtra said, "The king[53] shines like a thin and high flame. I have treated him with falsehood. He will destroy my evil sons in battle. Everything always seems to be a cause for anxiety and therefore, my mind is always anxious. O immensely intelligent one! Tell me that which will relieve me of my anxiety."

'Vidura replied, "O unblemished one! I see no peace for you, other than in learning, austerities, control of the senses and discarding of avarice. Intelligence drives away fear. Austerities lead to greatness. Service of preceptors leads to knowledge. Yoga leads to peace. Those who desire salvation roam around, free from love and hatred, and without resorting to the merits of donations and the merits of the Vedas. After studies that have been learnt well, after battles that have been fought well, after deeds that have been performed well and after austerities that have been performed well, happiness increases. Those who have been separated from their relatives cannot find sleep, no matter how well the beds may have been prepared. O king! They find no pleasure from intercourse with women, or from the praises of bards and minstrels. Those who have been separated from their relatives do not observe dharma. Those who have been separated in this way do not find happiness. Those who have been separated in this way do not attain fame. Those who have been separated in this way do not appreciate peace. They are not satisfied with the advice offered to them. They cannot

find yoga and *kshema*.[54] O Indra among men! Those who are separated have no end, but for destruction. Milk is possible in cows. Austerities are possible in brahmanas. Fickleness is possible in women. Like that, fear is possible from one's relatives. Those who are learned use the metaphor of many long and thin threads. When they are joined together, because they are many, they can bear a large load. O Dhritarashtra! O bull among the Bharata lineage! Relatives are like kindling. When separated, they produce smoke. But when they are together, they blaze. O Dhritarashtra! Those who are severe towards brahmanas, women, relatives and cows fall down, like ripe fruit from stalks. A large tree that stands on its own, even if it is strong and firmly rooted, can in an instant be brought down by the wind, with its branches and its trunk. But if trees grow together and are firmly rooted, because they support each other, they can withstand stronger winds. Whatever be the qualities he may possess, enemies think that a single man is capable of being harmed, like a single tree against the wind. But because of mutual assistance and mutual support, relatives prosper together, like lotuses in a lake. Brahmanas, cows, women, children, relatives, those whose food one has partaken and those who have sought refuge must not be killed. O king! Even if he is rich, there is no quality greater in a man than that he should be without disease. O fortunate one! Those who are ill are the equals of those who are dead. Even if there is no disease, anger is like a headache. It is harsh, sharp and pungent and leads to evil. The good swallow it up, while the evil do not swallow it. O great king! Drink it up and be pacified. Those who are oppressed by disease do not care about the fruits. Nor do they obtain any satisfaction from objects. Those who are diseased are always full of unhappiness. They do not know the comforts of riches, or of happiness.

'"O king! I spoke to you before, when I saw Droupadi won at the gambling match. But you did not listen to my advice. 'Restrain Duryodhana. Stop him from gambling. Those who are learned, shun deceit. It is not strength if it runs counter to mildness. The mixed nature of dharma should be swiftly followed. Prosperity that is based on cruelty is destroyed, but if it is both mild and firm, it descends to the sons and the grandsons.' Let the sons of Dhritarashtra protect the Pandavas. Let the sons of Pandu protect your sons. Let the Kurus be united in their counsel and have the same enemies and friends. O king! Let them live in happiness and prosperity. O Ajamidha! You are now the pillar of the Kouravas. The lineage of the Kurus depends on you. The Parthas are young and have been tormented by their sojourn in the forest. O father![55] Preserve your fame by protecting them. Ensure an alliance between the Kouravas and the sons of Pandu. Let your enemies not seek out a weakness. O god among men! Let all of them be established in truth. O Indra among men! Restrain Duryodhana."'

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'Vidura said, "O Indra among kings! O son of Vichitravirya! O fortunate one! O Indra

among men! Svayambhuva Manu[56] named seventeen kinds of men who strike the air with their fists and seek to bend Indra's unbendable bow and also seek to bend the unbendable rays of the sun—he who instructs one who should not be taught; he who is angered; he who worships his enemies; he who fails to protect women; he who asks for what should not be asked; he who boasts; he who is well born, but does not perform proper acts; he who is weak, but always fights with someone stronger; he who speaks to someone who does not have faith in him; he who desires what should not be desired; he who is a father-in-law, but jokes with his daughter-in-law; he who dwells with his daughter-in-law, but expects to be respected; he who sows his seed in another man's field;[57] he who slanders women excessively; he who having received something from someone, does not remember it; he who having given, boasts about it; and he who seeks to prove that an evil person is honest. These men pursue the wind with nooses in their hands.[58] A man must be treated in accordance with what he is, and how he acts. That is dharma. One who uses deceit, must be treated with deceit.[59] One who is virtuous, must be treated with virtue."

'Dhritarashtra said, "It has been said in all the Vedas that a man has a life expectancy of one hundred years. What is the reason for not attaining that entire age?"

'Vidura replied, "O lord of men! Too much talk, too much pride, lack of renunciation, anger, avarice and enmity with friends—these are six sharp swords that slice off the life expectancies of embodied beings. O fortunate one! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is these that kill a man, not death. He who goes to the wife of someone who trusts him, he who violates his preceptor's bed, a brahmana who marries a shudra woman or drinks liquor and one who kills someone who seeks refuge—all these are the equals of a killer of brahmanas. The learned texts say that penances must be performed for associating with these. A generous householder whose words are not mixed with falsehood, one who eats last,[60] one who does not cause any violence, one who does not do any harm, one who avoids discord, one who is grateful, one who is truthful, one who is mild—such a learned person goes to heaven. O king! It is easy to find men who are always pleasant in speech. But it is difficult to find a speaker or a listener for unpleasant, but appropriate words. A king has a friend in a person who resorts to dharma and regardless of what is pleasant or unpleasant to his lord, provides unpleasant but appropriate counsel. A man must be abandoned for the sake of the lineage. A lineage must be abandoned for the sake of the village. A village must be abandoned for the sake of the country. The earth must be abandoned for the sake of the soul. One must preserve riches for the sake of a calamity. One must protect one's wife with one's riches. One must always protect oneself with one's wife and riches.

'"O king! O descendant of Pratipa![61] At the time of the dicing, I had told you that it was not right. O son of Vichitravirya! But that brought you displeasure, like medicine and diet to a man who is diseased. You have vanquished the Pandavas, who are like

peacocks with many-coloured feathers, with the sons of Dhritarashtra, who are like crows. You have given up the lions and have resorted to the assembled jackals. O Indra among men! When the time comes, you will sorrow over this. The servants are devoted to a lord who is not angry all the time and faithfully seek to ensure his welfare. They do not forsake him in times of difficulty. One should not seek to increase the prosperity of strangers by curtailing the wages that are paid to servants. Deprived of comforts and denied what has been due to them, even affectionate advisers turn against their lord. Having first accounted for everything that must be done and having determined wages according to the tasks, one must then seek to obtain appropriate allies. Allies accomplish what is difficult to achieve. He who knows all the intentions of his lord, performs his tasks tirelessly. He speaks for his welfare and is affectionate and noble.[62] He knows his own strengths and should be regarded as one's own self.[63] If a servant is instructed but pays no attention to the words, or if he answers back when he is instructed, if he argues because of insolence over his wisdom, he must instantly be dismissed.

'"Lacking in pride, manly, swift to act, compassionate, polished, incapable of corruption, free from disease and generous in speech—it is said that these eight qualities must characterize a messenger. A sensible man must never go to the house of a stranger at the wrong time, out of a sense of confidence. He must not conceal himself at a crossroads in the night. He must not desire a woman whom the kings want. One should not seek counsel with one who is in disguise, or one who associates with lowly company. There is no need to say that such a person is untrustworthy, but one should dismiss him on some pretext. A compassionate king must avoid financial transactions with a harlot, the servant of a king, a son, a brother, a widow with infant children, a mercenary and one who has devoted servants.[64] Eight qualities adorn a man who bathes—strength, beauty, pureness in pronunciation of vowels, delicacy of touch, fragrance, cleanliness, prosperity and association with beautiful women. Six qualities adorn those who eat in moderation—immunity from disease, long life, happiness, strength, possession of children who are healthy and freedom from accusations about being a glutton. One who performs improper acts, one who eats excessively, one who is hated by men, one who is deceitful, one who is cruel, one who has no sense of time or space, one who does not know how to dress—such people should not be given a lodging in the house. Even if one is in need, one must not solicit help from a miser, one who speaks with malice, one who is not learned, one who has fallen into evil ways, one who respects the unworthy, one who is cruel, one who makes enemies out of others and one who is ungrateful. There are six worst kinds of men one must not serve—those engaged in vile deeds, those who speak a lot, those who always utter lies, those lacking in devotion, those who are devoid of affection and those who are vain. Success depends on one's aides and aides depend on one's success. They depend on each other and each

cannot succeed without the other. After one has obtained sons and not burdened them with one's debts, one must arrange a livelihood for them. After marrying off one's daughters properly, one must resort to the forest and live the life of a hermit. One must act for the welfare of all beings and for that which brings happiness to one's own self. This must be done for the sake of god and this is the root behind the success of dharma and artha. Intelligence, power, energy, spirit, resilience and resolution—if one possesses these, why should one be afraid that one might not have a livelihood?

'"Behold the evils from having engaged in a quarrel with the Pandavas. Even the gods, together with Shakra, tremble at them. This enmity with your sons leads to a life full of constant anxiety and the destruction of fame, leading to the delight of your enemies. You are an equal of Indra. This anger of Bhishma's, of Drona's, and of King Yudhishthira's, when ignited, will destroy the world, like a white planet that obliquely descends from the sky. Your hundred sons, together with Karna, and the five Pandavas can rule the entire earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean. O king! The sons of Dhritarashtra are the forest and it is my view that Pandu's sons are the tigers. Do not cut down the forest with its tigers. Do not drive the tigers away from the forest. The forest is protected by the tigers. The tigers are protected by the forest. Those who are evil in intelligence do not wish to know about the good qualities of others, as much as they wish to know about the qualities they don't possess. If one wishes artha to be accomplished completely, one must adhere to dharma right from the beginning. Artha is not separated from dharma, just as amrita is not separated from the world of heaven. All this, whether it is natural or not natural, is known to one who withdraws from evil and devotes himself to welfare. He who serves dharma, artha and kama at the right time, obtains a combination of dharma, artha and kama here, and in the hereafter. O king! One who controls the rising force of anger and delight obtains prosperity and is not deluded when there is a calamity.

'"Listen to me. Men always possess five kinds of strength and the strength of arms is said to be the most inferior of strengths. O fortunate one! The obtaining of good advisers is said to be the second strength. Those who wish to be victorious have said that the obtaining of riches is the third strength. O king! One's natural strength, obtained from a father and a grandfather, is the strength of noble birth and is said to be the fourth strength. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! But all these strengths are collected in the strength that is said to be the most superior, the strength that derives from wisdom. If a man does great injury to another man and thereby excites his enmity, he cannot presume to be secure, only because he is a long distance away. In deciding on what should be done, no wise man can be certain about women, kings, snakes, studying, those who serve the enemy, objects of desire and the span of life. For one who has been pierced by the arrow of wisdom, there are no physicians or medicines, no mantras chanted with oblations, no benedictions, no incantations and no successful antidotes to

poison.[65] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! A man should not ignore a snake, a fire, a lion, or a son born from a noble lineage. All of them are extremely energetic. The energy of fire is great in this world. It is hidden in wood, but does not consume the wood, unless it is ignited by others. But when the wood is drilled and kindled through friction, it[66] uses its energy to swiftly burn up the wood, the forest and everything else. In the same way, those born in noble lineages have the energy of the fire. They are forgiving and seem to have no form, like fire inside wood. You and your sons follow the way of creepers. It is my view that Pandu's sons are the shala trees. Creepers cannot grow without resorting to a large tree. O king! O son of Ambika! You and your sons are the forest. O father![67] Know that the Pandavas are the lions in the forest. Devoid of the lions, the forest will be destroyed. Without the forest, the lions will be destroyed."'

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'Vidura said, "When an aged one arrives, a young person's life force rises up. He regains it by rising up and offering a respectful welcome.[68] A seat must be given to a virtuous person who has arrived. Water must be brought so that he can wash his feet. After he has been asked about his welfare, one can then recount one's own affairs. He must be patiently offered food, reflecting on what is appropriate. The learned ones have said that a person's life is in vain if one who is versed with the mantras does not accept his water, madhuparka and cow at his house, because of his avarice, fears and miserliness. A physician, a maker of arrows, an impure man, a thief, a cruel one, a drunkard, an abortionist, a mercenary and one who sells the sacred texts[69] do not deserve to be offered water as guests, even if they are liked by the host. Salt, cooked food, curds, milk, honey, oil, ghee, sesamum seeds, meat, roots and fruits, vegetables, dyed garments, all fragrances and molasses must not be sold.[70] One who does not fall prey to anger, one who regards a lump of earth and gold equally, one who has discarded grief, one who is beyond friendship and enmity, blame and praise and pleasure and displeasure and one who roams around completely oblivious, is a true mendicant. A foremost and pure ascetic lives on wild rice, roots, nuts and vegetables. He is in control of himself and is always attentive to fire sacrifices. He dwells in the forest and is always attentive towards his guests. After causing injury to an intelligent person, one should not be satisfied because one is a long distance away. An intelligent person has long arms and when injured, will cause hurt in return. One should not trust those who should not be trusted. Those who can be trusted should not be trusted too much. Hardships created by such trust can destroy the roots. One should not be envious. One must protect one's wife. One must share one's property. One must be pleasant in speech. One must be mild. One must speak sweetly to women, but one must not come under their control. Women are the prosperity of a household. They deserve respect. They are immensely fortunate. They are pure. They light up the house. Therefore, they must be specially protected. The

supervision of the inner quarters should be given to the father, the kitchen to the mother and the cows should be given to someone who is equal to one's own self. However, agriculture must be attended to by one's own self. The conduct of trade can be left to the servants. Brahmanas must be served by the sons.

'"Fire arose from water. Kshatriyas arose from brahmanas. Iron arose from rock. All their energy is pacified when they return to their wombs. Virtuous ones born in noble lineages have energy like that of the fire. They are forgiving and do not have a form, like fire that is hidden in wood. A king whose counsel is not known by insiders or outsiders, but who looks at everything with his own eyes, will enjoy prosperity. One should not speak about what one wishes to do. One's deeds of dharma, kama and artha will be seen, without the counsel being divulged. Having ascended the peak of a mountain or the roof of the palace, or going to a forest that is devoid of grass, one should make one's plans. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! One who is not a well-wisher should not get to know about the ultimate plan, nor should a well-wisher who is not learned, or a learned one who does not possess self-control. The desire for artha and the protection of counsel depend on the adviser. A king whose attendants get to know about all his deeds only after they have been performed, and whose counsels are kept secret, will certainly be successful. If one commits forbidden acts out of ignorance, one even loses one's life as a consequence of those deeds. The performance of praiseworthy deeds brings happiness. Their non-performance leads to great injury later. O king! One should possess conduct that is respected and know about the six means for stability, increase and decrease.[71] Else, the earth will become independent.[72] If his anger and delight are infallible, if he himself looks after what should be done, if he has complete information about his treasury, the earth and its riches will be under his control. A lord of the earth should be content with his title and his umbrella.[73] He should divide his riches among his servants and not keep everything for himself. A brahmana knows a brahmana in the same way that a husband knows his wife, a king knows his advisers and one king knows another king. An enemy who deserves to be killed should not be freed when he is under your control. If he is not killed, he will soon become a source of danger. One must always try to restrain one's anger against gods, kings, brahmanas, the aged, the young and the sick. A wise person avoids pointless quarrels, only fools seek them. Through this, one obtains fame in this world and does not confront disasters. Women do not wish to obtain a eunuch as their husband. Like that, no one wishes to have a lord whose favours are fruitless and whose anger is also pointless. Intelligence does not always lead to riches. Stupidity does not always lead to poverty. Only the wise know about the ways of this world. Others do not. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Those who are stupid always disrespect those who are learned, have good conduct, are aged in age and aged in intelligence and are elders in prosperity and birth. Those who are ignoble in conduct, lacking in wisdom, envious, performers of adharma, wicked in

speech and prone to anger, confront disaster. Absence of deceit, generosity, observance of rites at the right time and appropriateness in speech make one dear to all beings. One who is without deceit, skilful, grateful, intelligent and upright, is surrounded by a family, even if one's treasury is empty. Fortitude, serenity, self-control, purity, compassion, kindness in speech and friendliness towards friends—these are the seven kindlings of prosperity. O lord of men! One who does not share his property, one who is evil in soul, one who is ungrateful, one who is shameless—such a person is worst among men and must be avoided in this world. One cannot sleep happily at night, if there is a snake in the house. Like that, being guilty oneself, one should not incite those who are inside the house to anger against those who are innocent. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Those who are tainted with evil can destroy yoga and kshema. Just as the gods are propitiated, they must always be tended to. Possessions owned by women, those who are foremost among those who are intoxicated and those who possess ignoble conduct—there is no doubt that all of these are in danger. O king! When a woman, a deceitful one or a child is in control, there is no doubt that one will helplessly sink, like a boat made of stone in a river. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is my view that the learned ones are those who can grasp the general principles, rather than the specific details. The details are a trifle. A man who is praised by deceitful ones, who is praised by minstrels and who is praised by harlots, does not live for long.

'"Having abandoned those supreme archers, the infinitely energetic Pandavas, you have entrusted the great prosperity of the Bharatas to Duryodhana. You will soon see him dislodged from that, just as the foolish Bali, intoxicated with his riches, was dislodged from the three worlds."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "Man is not the master of his destiny. He is like a wooden puppet dangling from a string. The creator has made him subject to destiny. Therefore, continue to speak. I am patiently listening to your words."

'Vidura replied, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! By speaking when it was not the right time, even Brihaspati's intelligence seems like ignorance and he is insulted. One is loved because of his gifts. Yet another is loved because of his pleasant words. Yet another is loved because of his strength of mantras and roots.[74] But one who is loved, is loved. One who is hated is not virtuous, or intelligent, or learned. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! All the pure deeds are ascribed to a loved one and all the evil ones to one who is hated. O great king! There is no loss, if that loss brings on a gain. But that should be thought of as a loss, which having been gained, destroys much more. Some are prosperous because of qualities, others because they possess riches. O Dhritarashtra! Avoid those who are superior in riches, but are devoid of qualities."

'Dhritarashtra said, "All that you have said has been approved of by the wise and is

for my welfare. But I cannot abandon my son. Where there is dharma, there is victory."

'Vidura replied, "He who naturally possesses the qualities and is endowed with humility, will not ignore the slightest bit of suffering that is caused to all beings. Those who malign others, are fond of unhappiness confronted by others and seek to foment quarrels among others will always jump at such an opportunity. There is great sin in accepting riches from, and great danger in giving riches to, those who have evil in their sight. There is extremely great danger in dwelling with them. One should avoid association with those who are known to be wicked. One should avoid men who possess similar and other great taints. When an association with a well-wisher comes to an end, if one is inferior, one's affection is also destroyed, as are the fruits and happiness that derive from an association with a well-wisher. He[75] then seeks to malign and endeavours to bring about destruction. Even if the injury was slight, because of his delusion, he cannot find any peace. One should not associate with such low and cruel ones who have not been able to control their souls. A wise person will use his intelligence to examine this with skill and maintain a distance. He who helps poor, miserable and diseased relatives, will obtain the prosperity of sons and cattle and earn eternal fame. Those who desire their own welfare must help the relatives to prosper. O Indra among kings! Therefore, act virtuously, so that the lineage can be extended. O king! By acting well towards your relatives, you will be united with prosperity. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Even if they do not possess qualities, relatives must be protected. How can one refuse those who possess qualities and desire favours? O lord of the earth! Be gracious towards the miserable Pandavas. O lord! Give them a few villages so that they can sustain themselves. O lord of men! By doing this, you will obtain fame in this world. O father![76] You are aged. Your sons will be protected through this deed. What I speak is for your own welfare. Know that I am affectionate towards you. O father![77] One who wishes for welfare should not quarrel with relatives. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He should enjoy the happiness with his relatives. Eating together, conversing together, exhibiting affection towards each other—this is what should be done among relatives. There should never be conflict. In this world, relatives rescue and relatives make one sink. Those who follow good conduct, rescue. Those who follow evil conduct, make one sink. O Indra among kings! O one who shows honour! Follow good conduct towards the Pandavas. Surrounded by them, you will become unassailable before your enemies. If a relative is oppressed, like a deer confronting one with smeared hands,[78] when he meets his prosperous relative, he takes on the other person's demerits.[79] O best among men! You will be tormented later on, when you hear that they or your sons have been slain. Reflect on this. Do not perform a deed that will make you ascend your bed and be tormented. This life is uncertain. One should not act in this way from the outset. It is not true that no man other than Bhargava strays.[80] But one who is intelligent must consider the consequences of action. O lord of men! If Duryodhana

committed an evil act earlier, as the elder of the lineage, you must remedy it. Having established them in their stations, you will be freed from sins in this world. O best of men! You will be revered by the learned ones. Wise ones have spoken about the fruits that bring happiness. One should think about them and act accordingly. One will then obtain eternal fame.

'"Humility destroys bad conduct. Valour destroys adverse circumstances. Forgiveness always destroys anger. Good conduct destroys evil omens. O king! A lineage should be judged in accordance with its servants, arenas of action, abode, food and attire. He whose mind is inclined towards appropriate conduct, even in secret, and he who is inclined towards wisdom—for these two, friendship is never destroyed. Like a well covered with grass, a learned one must avoid those who are evil in intelligence and have no wisdom. Friendship with them is destroyed. Nor should a wise one have friendship with one who is arrogant, stupid, fearsome, rash and a follower of adharma. One should desire friendship with those who are grateful, followers of dharma, truthful, lacking in meanness, firm, loyal, in control of their senses and established in that which one should be attached to. Withdrawal from the senses is more difficult than death. Serving them in excess brings destruction, even for the gods. The learned say that mildness towards all beings, lack of jealousy, forgiveness, fortitude and respect for one's friends ensures a long life. By resorting to his intelligence, an extremely firm man follows the conduct of supplanting an objective that has been frustrated, with one that is better to follow. A man who is firm in his resolution about how to deal with what will happen, and about the consequences of earlier deeds, is established in the present and his objectives are not destroyed. One is always borne by what one follows in one's deeds, thoughts and speech. Therefore, one must follow what ensures welfare. Undertaking what is auspicious, yoga, learning, resilience, truthfulness and constant service to virtuous beings, ensure prosperity. Perseverance is the root of prosperity, destroying unhappiness and bringing happiness. One who is like this attains greatness and supreme happiness. O father![81] There is nothing more glorious and more healing than an act of forgiveness by a powerful one, everywhere and at all times. A weak person must forgive everything. A strong person must do that for the sake of dharma. If a person regards gain and loss equally, forgiveness is always established in him. Follow happiness as long as it does not destroy dharma and artha. But one should not follow kama, in accordance with the conduct of those who are foolish. There is no prosperity for those who are oppressed by unhappiness, those who are confounded, those who are atheists, those who are lazy, those who are dishonest, those who are not self-controlled and those who are devoid of enterprise. An honest man may be united with honesty and may be mild. Thinking that this shows a lack of strength, an evil-minded one may oppress him. Because of this fear, prosperity does not approach a person who is extremely noble, extremely generous, extremely valorous and extremely devoted to

vows, just as those who are insolent about their wisdom. The fruit of the Vedas is the agnihotra. The fruit of good conduct is learning. The fruits of wives are intercourse and sons. The fruits of riches are generosity in giving. One who earns riches through adharma and uses this to perform deeds for the hereafter does not obtain those fruits after death, because those riches were obtained through inappropriate means. One who has remnants left[82] should not be scared of wildernesses, forests, difficult terrain, extreme hardships, delusions and upraised weapons. Resilience, self-control, dexterity, steadfastness, fortitude, learning and beginnings based on contemplation—know these to be the roots of success. Austerities are the strength of ascetics. Knowledge of the brahman is the strength of those who wish to know the brahman. Violence is the strength of those who are not virtuous. Forgiveness is the strength of those who possess qualities. These eight do not cause obstructions to a rite—water, roots, fruits, milk, oblations, the pleasure of brahmanas, instructions of a preceptor and medicine. One should not do that to others which is injurious to one's own self. This is accumulated dharma. Everything else follows from desire. Anger should be conquered with lack of anger. Wickedness should be conquered with goodness. Miserliness should be conquered with generosity. Falsehood should be conquered with truth. One should never trust women, deceitful ones, sloths, cowards, those who are terrible, men who are insolent, thieves, those who are ingrates and atheists. There are four things that increase because of reverence, good conduct and constant servitude to superiors—fame, lifespan, renown and strength. Do not vainly set your mind on success that can be obtained through excessive exertion, transgression of dharma or obeisance to enemies. One should sorrow over a man who is without learning. One should sorrow over a couple that has no offspring. One should sorrow over subjects who are hungry. One should sorrow over a kingdom that has no king. Those who have bodies age through travels. Mountains age through rain. The lack of intercourse ages women. Harsh words age the mind. The Vedas are tarnished if they are not recounted. Brahmanas are tarnished from lack of vows. Curiosity tarnishes chaste women. Banishment from home tarnishes women. Silver tarnishes gold. Tin tarnishes silver. Lead tarnishes tin. Dust tarnishes lead. Do not vanquish sleep with more sleep. Do not vanquish women through desire. Do not conquer a fire by kindling it. Do not conquer thirst through liquor. One who conquers friends by giving, one who conquers enemies in battle and one who conquers wives through food and drink, is successful in his life.

'"Those who have thousands live. Those who have hundreds also live. O Dhritarashtra! Give up this desire. There is no other way to live. All the rice, barley, gold, animals and women on earth are not sufficient even for a single man. On beholding all this, do not be deluded. O king! O king! I am again telling you that you will behave well towards your sons if you treat them and the sons of Pandu equally."'

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‘Vidura said, “On being addressed by righteous men, if a man acts without success in mind and without transgressing his capacity, then he quickly finds fame. When they are gratified, righteous ones can bring about happiness. He who gives up a great objective that is tainted with adharma, without being induced, sleeps in peace and discards all his unhappiness, like a snake that casts off old skin. Falsehood by the superior, treachery towards a king and constant falsehood before a preceptor—these are equal to slaying a brahmana. Even the slightest bit of jealousy, death and discord destroy prosperity. Lack of servitude, haste, boastfulness—these are the three weapons that destroy learning. How can a person who seeks happiness find learning? How can a person who seeks learning find happiness? A person who seeks happiness should give up learning. A person who seeks learning should give up happiness. Fire is never satiated with wood. The great ocean is never satiated with rivers. Death is never satiated with all the beings. A woman with beautiful eyes is never satiated with men. Hope destroys steadfastness. Death destroys prosperity. Anger destroys riches. Miserliness destroys fame. Failure to tend destroys animals. O king! Even one single angry brahmana destroys a kingdom. A goat, brass, a chariot, honey, antidotes,[83] a bird, a learned brahmana,[84] an aged relative and a friend who faces adversity—these must always be kept in the house. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Manu[85] has said that for the sake of good fortune, a goat, an ox, sandalwood, a veena, a mirror, honey, butter, iron, copper,[86] a conch shell, gold, the nave of a wheel and yellow pigment for honouring gods, brahmanas and guests must be kept in a household. O father![87] I am telling you all these supreme and sacred words that are extremely special. Do not give up dharma out of desire, fear, greed, or even for the sake of life itself. Dharma is eternal. Happiness and unhappiness are transient. Life is eternal. Its constituent elements are transient.[88] Give up the transient and establish yourself in the eternal. Be content. Contentment is the supreme gain.

‘“Behold the immensely fortunate Indras among men who possessed great strength. After ruling the earth, full of grain and riches, they gave up their kingdoms and extensive objects of desire and came under the power of death. O king! People raise and take out of the house a son, reared with difficulty, who has been killed. Their hair is dishevelled and they lament piteously. They fling him into the midst of the funeral pyre, like a piece of wood. Once a person is dead, another person enjoys the riches, just as crows[89] and the fire consume the elements of the body. Surrounded by two things, merits and demerits, one goes to the other world. After casting it[90] away, relatives, well-wishers and sons return. But for the man who has been flung into the fire, his own deeds follow him. Above this world, and below the next, there is the greatest expanse of darkness. O king! Know that the senses are greatly deluded there. May you not attain it. After listening to these words, if you follow them entirely, you will obtain supreme fame in this world of the living and you will confront no fear, here or in the hereafter. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The soul is a river. Purity represents its tirthas.

Truthfulness is its water. Steadfastness constitutes the banks. Self-control represents the waves. Bathing in these, a performer of pure deeds purifies himself. The soul becomes pure and is like water in the eternal waters. There is a river in which the five senses are the water and desire and anger are the crocodiles. Make a boat out of steadfastness and cross the difficult eddies of repeated birth. After due honours, one who asks the counsel of his relatives who are aged in wisdom, aged in dharma, aged in learning and years, and follows them about what should be done and what should not be done, is never deluded. Protect your penis and stomach with steadfastness, the hands and the feet with the eyes, the eyes and the ears with the mind and the mind and speech with deeds. A brahmana who is always attached to ablutions, always dons the sacred thread, always studies, avoids food offered by outcasts,[91] speaks the truth and follows the tasks instructed by the preceptor—is never dislodged from Brahma's world. A kshatriya who studies the Vedas, offers oblations to the fire, performs sacrifices, protects the subjects, wields weapons for the sake of cattle and brahmanas, purifies his soul and is killed in battle—goes to heaven. A vaishya who studies, distributes his wealth at the right time to brahmanas, kshatriyas and those who are dependent on him and inhales the sacred smoke of the three pure fires[92]—obtains divine happiness in heaven after death. A shudra who shows homage in due order to brahmana, kshatriya and vaishya classes[93] and satisfies them—enjoys happiness in heaven after he has given up his body, because his sins are burnt up. I have told you about the dharma of the four varnas. Listen to the reason why I have told you this. O king! Pandu's son[94] is falling short of the dharma of kshatriyas. You should instruct him to follow the dharma of kings."

'Dhritarashtra replied, "This is just as you have always been instructing me. O amiable one! My mind also turns towards that which you have told me. My inclination has always been to turn towards the Pandavas. But whenever I meet Duryodhana, it turns in a contrary direction. No mortal one is capable of transgressing destiny. I think that destiny is the one who acts and human endeavour is futile."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "O Vidura! Is there anything that you have not spoken about so far? Tell me, since I am eager to listen to you. You are speaking about wonderful things."

'Vidura replied, "O Dhritarashtra! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The ancient and eternal youth Sanatsujata has said that there is no death. O great king! That supreme among intelligent ones will speak to you. He will bring out everything that is overt and covert, clinging to the heart."

'Dhritarashtra asked, "Do you not know what that eternal one will tell me? O Vidura! You must tell me, if you have that much of wisdom left."

'Vidura replied, "I have been born from a shudra womb. It is for that reason that I cannot tell you anything more. But I know about the eternal intelligence of that youth.

He was born in a brahmana womb and speaks about matters that are extremely secret. I will be censured by the gods by speaking to you about those."

'Dhritarashtra asked, "O Vidura! Tell me. Here, and in this body of mine, how can I meet the ancient and eternal one?"'

Vaishampayana said, 'Vidura thought about the rishi who was rigid in his vows. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! And having got to know about those thoughts, he showed himself. Vidura received him in accordance with the decreed rites and tasks. When he was rested and happily seated, Vidura told him, "O illustrious one! There is a doubt in Dhritarashtra's mind, which I am incapable of explaining. You should speak to him. On hearing this, this Indra among men will transcend all happiness and unhappiness, all gain and loss, and all pleasure and displeasure. Then old age and death will not overcome him, or fear and intolerance, hunger and thirst, insolence and power, hatred, lassitude, desire, anger, decline and rise."'

Section Fifty-Two

Sanatsujata Parva

This section has 121 shlokas and four chapters.

Chapter 705(42): 32 shlokas
Chapter 706(43): 37 shlokas
Chapter 707(44): 24 shlokas
Chapter 708(45): 28 shlokas

This section is named after Dhritarashtra's questioning of the sage Sanatsujata. Sanatsujata instructs Dhritarashtra.

705(42)

Vaishampayana said, 'The intelligent King Dhritarashtra honoured the words that Vidura had spoken. Desiring supreme intelligence, the great-souled one privately questioned Sanatsujata.

'Dhritarashtra asked, "O Sanatsujata! I have heard about your teaching that death does not exist. Yet, the gods and the asuras observed brahmacharya for the sake of immortality. Which of these is true?"

'Sanatsujata replied, "Some hold that deeds ensure immortality. Others say that there is no death. O king! Listen to my words on this, so that you no longer have any doubts. O kshatriya! Know that both of these statements are true. Know that the wise regard death as delusion. I am telling you that confusion is death. Therefore, I am telling you that there is immortality where there is no confusion. The asuras were vanquished because of their ignorance. Had they not possessed ignorance, they would have been like the brahman. Death is not a tiger that consumes beings. Its form is not one that can be fathomed. Some hold that Yama is death, but others do not agree. Immortality is the soul's pursuit of brahmacharya. That god[1] rules his kingdom in the world of the ancestors. He is auspicious towards those who are pure and is inauspicious towards those who are impure. Through instructions issued from his mouth, men suffer death in the form of anger, delusion and confusion. Being overcome by confusion, they leave for the hereafter and descend again.[2] Following him, the gods also go into a decline. Thus it is that this death[3] is also known by the name of death. But there are those who are attracted to the fruits of deeds. Because of their karma, they go there,[4] without transgressing death. There are learned ones who think and kill their desires, when they try to rise, realizing that these should not be respected. Because learned ones have killed their desires, though assuming the form of death, death cannot destroy them. A man who follows his desires is destroyed, together with the desires. A man who can conquer

his desires can withstand all passion. Darkness appears to beings in the form of hell. Deluded, they eagerly rush towards it and fall into the hole.[5] The sense of ego kills such a person first. Desire and anger grasp him and kill him later. Childish ones are thus despatched towards their death. But steady ones who have fortitude can transgress death. O kshatriya! If a man thinks of nothing,[6] how can a tiger made out of straw attack him? If the soul is confused through anger and desire, death exists within one's own body. Know that this is how death is born. One who is established in knowledge has no fear of death. If the object[7] is destroyed, so is death, just as mortal beings are destroyed when they confront death."

'Dhritarashtra asked, "There are those here who do not follow dharma. There are also those who follow dharma. Is dharma destroyed by evil or is evil destroyed by dharma?"

'Sanatsujata replied, "The fruits of both are enjoyed, that of dharma and of its opposite.[8] A learned one uses dharma to give up adharma. Know that dharma is stronger."

'Dhritarashtra said, "It is said that the eternal worlds are obtained by brahmanas who perform pure deeds in accordance with dharma. O learned one! It is said that there are different regions, depending on the deeds that have been performed."

'Sanatsujata replied, "There are brahmanas who are not proud of their strength. They do not try to surpass the strong with strength. In the hereafter, they are radiant in the world of heaven. Wherever a brahmana thinks food and drink are abundant, like grass during the rainy season, this is the place that he should savour. Where there is inauspicious danger, one should control one's pride. It is best not to act in excess, or try to establish superiority over other people. If one is not tormented because another one proclaims one's superiority, if one does not enjoy the property of brahmanas, food offered by such a person is regarded as acceptable by the righteous. A dog always eats its own vomit and causes injury to its own self. Like that, those who proclaim their own valour, eat their own vomit. A brahmana thinks that his conduct should always be unknown. Even if he dwells among his relatives, nothing will be known about him. What other brahmana is capable of destroying his inner soul? O kshatriya! It is because of such conduct that he can visualize the brahman that dwells inside him. He is never exhausted. He is honoured because he does not accept gifts from others. He never causes impediments. He is well versed, even if he does not seem to be well versed. Such a wise brahmana knows the brahman. These brahmanas are not rich in the wealth of men. They are rich because of the Vedas. They are difficult to assail. They are difficult to shake. Know that because of knowledge, they have the brahman in their bodies. Because he has to exert himself, a person, who knows that sacrifices have been performed to all the gods, is not the equal of a brahmana.[9] One who is honoured, though he does not exert himself, is truly honoured. When honoured, he does not think about it. Nor does he suffer because he is not honoured. One who is honoured should think that only the

learned show honours. If one is not honoured, one should not think that stupid ones, skilled in adharma and adept in the ways of the world, do not know how to honour a revered person. Honour and silence[10] cannot travel together. Know that this world is that of honour and that one is of silence. Prosperity is the abode of happiness, though it runs counter to the objective.[11] O kshatriya! For someone who is devoid of wisdom, the prosperity of the brahman is extremely difficult to obtain. Virtuous ones have spoken of many different kinds of doors to that, all difficult to uphold. There are six that counter pride and delusion—truth, uprightness, modesty, self-control, purity and knowledge."'

706(43)

'Dhritarashtra asked, "There may be a brahmana who has learnt the chants of the Rig, the Yajur and the Sama Veda. If he performs a sin, will he be tainted, or will he not be tainted?"

'Sanatsujata replied, "One who is learned in the chants of the Sama, the Rig and the Yajur will not be saved from his evil deeds. I am not speaking a falsehood to you. The metres do not save a deceitful one, who has resorted to deceit, from sin. When their wings have grown, birds flee a nest. Like that, the metres desert one whose time of destruction has come."

'Dhritarashtra asked, "O learned one! If the Vedas are incapable of saving one who is without dharma, why have the brahmanas eternally talked about them?"

'Sanatsujata replied, "The austerities performed in this world are seen to yield fruits in another. When they are established in rich austerities, brahmanas obtain those worlds."

'Dhritarashtra asked, "How can austerities be prosperous and how can they fail to be so? O Sanatsujata! Tell me this, so that we may get to know."

'Sanatsujata replied, "O king! There are twelve vices like anger and another six like cruelty. Brahmanas who know about the sacred texts are knowledgeable about the qualities that prevent dharma—anger, desire, avarice, delusion, possessiveness, compassion,[12] discontent, pride, sorrow, lust, jealousy and aversion—these are the twelve human vices that men must always avoid. O Indra among kings! Every single one of them waits for a weakness in a man, like a hunter waits for a deer. Maligning others,[13] covetousness, vanity, vindictiveness, anger and fickleness—if these six vices are left uncontrolled, they incite men towards evil in their dharma. They do not perform any good in extremely difficult situations. Scheming to enjoy, hatred, pride in deceit, regrets after giving, the weakness of miserliness, praise of one's kin and hatred of women—these are the seven cruel vices. Dharma, truthfulness, self-control, austerities, lack of envy, modesty, forgiveness, contentment, sacrifices, generosity, fortitude and learning—these are the twelve great vows for a brahmana. If one dwells with these twelve, one is capable of ruling the entire earth. Even if one is distinguished by the presence of three, two or only one of these, know that one does not possess anything.

Self-control, renunciation and lack of ignorance—immortality is vested in these. Learned brahmanas say that truthfulness is the foremost. There are eighteen qualities that work against self-control—perverseness in what is done or not done, falsehood, discontent, desire, acquisitiveness, covetousness, anger, sorrow, thirst, desire, treachery, jealousy, possessiveness, regret, gloating, forgetfulness, slander and vanity. The learned say that one who is free from these vices is self-controlled. There are six types of renunciation regarded as superior—lack of rejoicing when one obtains something pleasant; lack of misery when something unpleasant is generated; giving to worthy supplicants without being asked for, as long as it is not a beloved wife or sons. Even if one is asked for what should not be asked, this is known as the third quality. Relinquishment of objects, non-fulfilment of desire and giving up the fruits of deeds[14]—if one possesses these qualities, even if one possesses objects, a man is one who renounces, with the intelligence of a student. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! There are eight vices that lead to ignorance and these vices must be avoided—those that come from the five senses, the mind, the past and the future. A person who is freed from these is happy. Only austerities which are free from these vices, and are united with the qualities, become prosperous and successful. O Indra among kings! This is what you asked me. What else do you wish to hear?"

'Dhritarashtra said, "Some people have said that there are five Vedas, with ancient accounts as the fifth.[15] Others say that there are four Vedas and still others say that there are three Vedas. Others say that there are two Vedas and still others say that there is one Veda. There are others who accept no hymns. O brahmana! Therefore, what should I now regard as the true Veda?"

'Sanatsujata replied, "Because there is ignorance about the single Veda, many Vedas have been thought of. O Indra among kings! There is one truth and all of them are established in that truth. Ignoring the Vedas, wisdom is sought in the great one.[16] If gifts, studying and sacrifices are followed out of greed, the resolutions of those proud ones deviate from the truth. Therefore, one should undertake a sacrifice only for the sake of the truth. When a man performs this with the mind, speech and deeds, he is successful in his intentions and is established in his intentions. Without being secretive, one should be consecrated in a rite. The word *satyam* is derived from the root *sat*[17] and is the supreme objective and truth. The results of knowledge are direct. Those of austerities are generated indirectly. A brahmana who recites a lot, should only be known as one who recites a lot. O kshatriya! Therefore, do not regard a brahmana to be superior only because he recites. He who has not deviated from the truth should be known as a brahmana. O kshatriya! When the class of rishis was created, Atharvan[18] chanted these ancient hymns. Those who learnt them were known as those who recited hymns. But they do not know the one[19] who should be known through the Vedas. O king! There are some who know the Vedas and there are some who know what should be known

through the Vedas. He who knows the Vedas knows what should be known through the Vedas. He who knows what should be known through the Vedas is established in truth. I know him to be a brahmana who explains skilfully and is capable of removing doubts, having dispelled all his own doubts. The One[20] cannot be found by going to the east or the south, or the west, or diagonally, or in any direction at all. One should think about this while meditating in silence, being immobile even in one's thoughts. The brahman that is established in the inner soul will then manifest itself. He who maintains silence is a *muni*;[21] one does not become a muni by residing in the forest. He who knows the one without decay is said to be the supreme hermit. One who knows the grammar behind everything is said to be a grammarian. But a man who can directly see all the worlds is a man who sees everything. O kshatriya! A brahmana who is established in the truth sees the brahman, by following in due order, what is prescribed in the Vedas. This is what I am telling you. Know this."'

707(44)

'Dhritarashtra said, "O Sanatsujata! These supreme words that you have spoken about the brahman have the form of the entire universe. These supreme words are extremely rare among desirable objects. O young one! Therefore, speak to me."

'Sanatsujata replied, "You have happily asked me about the brahman, but it is not something that can be obtained in a hurry. I will tell you the ancient knowledge about the one who is not manifest. This can be successfully known through the practice of brahmacharya."

'Dhritarashtra said, "You have said that the eternal knowledge about the one who is not manifest can be successfully obtained through the practice of brahmacharya and not through the performance of acts at prescribed points in time. How does one then obtain the immortality of the brahman?"

'Sanatsujata replied, "Those who conquer their desires in this world, while patiently establishing themselves on the brahman, are firmly based on truth, and pluck the soul out of the body, like a stalk of *munja* grass.[22] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The father and the mother create the body. But the birth instructed by the preceptor is the true birth, because that is free of age or death.[23] Those who enter a preceptor's womb and become embryos there, observing brahmacharya, become learned in the sacred texts in this world and attain supreme yoga after they give up their bodies. The preceptor fills the ears with the truth, practises truth and confers immortality. He should be regarded as the father and the mother. Knowing of his deeds, one should not cause him any injury. A disciple must always show respect to his preceptor. Pure and without distraction, he should study. His pride should not be annoyed, nor should he be angered, at tasks he is asked to perform. This is the first quarter of brahmacharya. Doing what pleases the preceptor, in deeds, thoughts and speech, even at the expense of life and

riches, is said to be the second quarter. The conduct towards the preceptor should be the same as that towards the preceptor's wife, acting as one is instructed and performing what is pleasant. This is said to be the third quarter. Thinking oneself to be wise, one should never tell a preceptor that one isn't responsible for a deed. Even if one thinks this, one should not say it. This is the fourth quarter of brahmacharya. One should dwell by presenting to the preceptor whatever objects one obtains. For those who are righteous and possess many qualities, the conduct should be the same towards the preceptor's son. When one dwells in this way, one prospers in this world. One obtains many sons and fame. All the directions shower down upon him and many people dwell with him in turn, for the sake of brahmacharya. It is through such brahmacharya that the gods attained divinity, the immensely fortunate and learned rishis attained the world of Brahma and the gandharvas and the apsaras obtained their beauty. It was with such brahmacharya that the sun was born earlier. O king! He who lies down and torments his entire body with austerities, will transcend childishness and become learned. In due course of time, he will conquer death. O kshatriya! The worlds that people conquer through deeds they have performed are finite. But through knowledge, one obtains the entire brahman. There is no other path to traverse."

'Dhritarashtra asked, "Does he[24] appear white or red? Is he dark, black like collyrium, or brown? In what form does a righteous and learned brahmana visualize the seat of that immortal and undecaying one?"

'Sanatsujata replied, "He does not appear as white or red, as black, or with the complexion of iron. Nor does he have the complexion of the sun. He is not established in the earth or the sky. He is not to be found in the waters of the ocean. He does not resort to the stars, or the lightning. His form cannot be seen in the clouds. He cannot be found in the wind or the gods, nor can he be seen in the moon or the sun. He is not the mantras of the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda or the Atharva Veda, nor can he be seen in the unblemished Sama Veda. O king! It is certain that he cannot be seen in great vows and in *rathantara* and *barhata*.[25] He is the darkness that is impossible to cross. He is beyond death and beyond destruction. His form cannot be seen, it is as thin as a razor's edge, but he is also larger in form than the mountains. He is the foundation. He is immortality. He is the worlds. He is the brahman. He is fame. He is the source of all beings and at the time of destruction, he is the one into whom they flow. He is without division and gigantic. His fame soars up. The words of the wise say that he is immutable. Everything in the universe is established in him. Those who know him become immortal."'

708(45)

'Sanatsujata said, "He is the seed and is a great and blazing light. He is the resplendent one whose fame is great. He is the one whom the gods worship. It is because of him that

the sun shines. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. Everything originates with the brahman's seed. It is because of the brahman's seed that everything flourishes. It is because of the seed that stars burn in the middle of the sky and the sun obtains its radiance. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. It is because of him that there is water in the middle of the ocean. It is because of him that the two gods are in the firmament.[26] They hold up what flows in and what flows out, in the earth and in heaven.[27] He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. Both these gods carry earth and heaven. The seed bears the directions and the universe. The rivers flow from those directions and the great oceans are created from these. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. Based on the wheels, the steady chariot ceaselessly works. He has a flaming crest and the celestial and ageless horses bear him in the sky.[28] He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. There is no form that is similar to his. He can never be seen with the eyes. Learned ones who get to know him through their minds and their hearts, become immortal. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. There is a terrible river with twelve flows protected by the gods and one drinks from it.[29] He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. Like a bee, there are those who drink the honey only for half a month.[30] He is the lord who has ordained oblations for all beings. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. There is an ashvattha tree with golden foliage. They alight like featherless birds there. Having obtained feathers, they fly out in different directions.[31] He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. The complete is taken out from the complete. It is from the complete that the complete universe is created. The complete is taken from the complete. But it is the complete that remains.[32] He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. The wind is created from him and it in him that it subsides. Agni and soma were created from him. All life depends on him. One knows everything through him. One is incapable of describing him. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. Apana dissolves into *prana*, prana dissolves into the moon.[33] The moon dissolves into the sun. The sun dissolves into the supreme. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. When it ascends out of the water, the swan does not raise one foot. If it did raise it,[34] there would be no death, nor immortality.[35] He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. There is one great-souled god. He is the being who swallows the fire. If one knows this being, one's soul will never come to any harm. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. Even if the thousands and thousands of wings are spread out to fly, they must return to the centre and what is in the centre, with the speed of thought.[36] He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. His form is stationed beyond the range of sight. Only those who are extremely pure in soul

can see him. A wise one desiring welfare sees him through the mind. Those who resort to him, become immortal. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. Because of their own learning and their own conduct, mortal ones hide him, like snakes in their holes. But only foolish ones are deluded by this and deceived and confounded, follow the dangerous road. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. There is neither existence, nor is there non-existence. Therefore, what source can give rise to death or immortality? Both truth and falsehood are based on the same truth. Truth and falsehood originate in the same womb. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. Among men, whether they are righteous or wicked, these are not seen in an equal way.[37] Having been united with the divine knowledge of immortality, one should taste that honey. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. The heart is not tormented because of abuse.[38] Nor do lack of studying and lack of agnihotra matter. The mind becomes as light as the brahman. Those who are wise and persevering obtain him. He is the one whom the yogis see. He is the eternal and illustrious lord. Thus, one sees one's own soul in all beings, all engaged in various tasks. After this, why should there be any sorrow? There is a great deal of water in a well that overflows in all the directions. Like that, brahmanas who wish to know can use all the Vedas.[39] The great-souled being is the size of a thumb. Though he resides in the heart, he cannot be seen. He is unborn. He ceaselessly roams, throughout night and day. Knowing this, a wise one is full of bliss. I am I. I am also the mother, the father and the son. I am the soul of everything, whether I exist or whether I do not exist. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I am the ancient grandfather,[40] the father and the son. You dwell in my soul. But you are not mine and I am not yours. The soul is the foundation. The soul is the birth. I am the foundation without decay that the Vedas speak about. I am subtler than the most subtle. With excellent intelligence, I am awake in all beings. Know him to be the father of all beings, dwelling in the lotus in all beings.'"[41]

Section Fifty-Three

Yana-Sandhi Parva

This section had 726 shlokas and twenty-four chapters.

Chapter 709(46): 17 shlokas
Chapter 710(47): 103 shlokas
Chapter 711(48): 47 shlokas
Chapter 712(49): 45 shlokas
Chapter 713(50): 61 shlokas
Chapter 714(51): 19 shlokas
Chapter 715(52): 16 shlokas
Chapter 716(53): 19 shlokas
Chapter 717(54): 66 shlokas
Chapter 718(55): 16 shlokas
Chapter 719(56): 60 shlokas
Chapter 720(57): 29 shlokas
Chapter 721(58): 30 shlokas
Chapter 722(59): 23 shlokas
Chapter 723(60): 29 shlokas
Chapter 724(61): 18 shlokas
Chapter 725(62): 31 shlokas
Chapter 726(63): 16 shlokas
Chapter 727(64): 15 shlokas
Chapter 728(65): 9 shlokas
Chapter 729(66): 15 shlokas
Chapter 730(67): 21 shlokas
Chapter 731(68): 14 shlokas
Chapter 732(69): 7 shlokas

Yana *means moving or journey as a verb and conveyance as a noun.* Sandhi *means both connection and peace or alliance. So the name of this parva can be interpreted in two different ways, and both are correct. First, there is the straightforward meaning of a journey (Sanjaya's) for peace. Second, this section is the connecting section between two separate journeys, Sanjaya's and Krishna's. Sanjaya conveys Arjuna's message and there is a discussion in the assembly of the Kurus. Karna refuses to fight until Bhishma has fallen. The section ends inconclusively, with a reference to Krishna's impending mission.*

709(46)

Vaishampayana said, 'Thus, the king[1] conversed with Sanatsujata and the intelligent Vidura and the night passed. When the night had passed, all the kings entered the assembly hall and were delighted to see the suta.[2] With Dhritarashtra at the forefront, all of them went to the king's splendid assembly hall, desiring to hear the words the Parthas had sent, in conformity with dharma and artha. The extensive arena was plastered white and was decorated with gold. It was extremely beautiful, like the rays of

the moon, and was sprinkled with excellent water. It was strewn with beautiful seats made of gold, wood, stone and ivory, which were covered with excellent cushions.

'O bull among the Bharata lineage! Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Shalya, Kritavarma, Jayadratha, Ashvatthama, Vikarna, Somadatta, Bahlika, the immensely wise Vidura, maharatha Yuyutsu—all these assembled together with other royal warriors. Having placed Dhritarashtra at their head, they entered the splendid assembly hall. O king! Duhshasana, Chitrasena, Shakuni Soubala, Durmukha, Duhsaha, Karna, Uluka and Vivimshati placed the intolerant Duryodhana, king of the Kurus, at their head and entered the assembly hall, like gods entering Shakra's abode. O king! O king! When those brave ones, with arms like clubs, entered the assembly hall, it looked like a mountainous cavern full of lions. Having entered the assembly hall, those great archers, who adorned any gathering and were as radiant as the sun, seated themselves on extremely expensive seats. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When all the kings were seated, the gatekeeper informed them that the son of the suta had arrived. "Our messenger has swiftly returned on the chariot, drawn by Saindhava horses that can bear loads well, from the Pandavas." Wearing his earrings, he[3] quickly descended from the chariot and entered the assembly hall, which was full of great-souled lords of the earth.

'Sanjaya said, "O Kouravas! Know that I have returned after having gone and met the Pandavas. Know that the Pandavas salute all the Kurus, in accordance with their ages. They honour the elders according to age and those who are of the same age as friends. According to age, they honour those who are their juniors. O lords of the earth! On the instructions of Dhritarashtra, I earlier went from here to visit the Pandavas, and listen to what I have to say."'

710(47)

'Dhritarashtra said, "O Sanjaya! O son![4] I am asking you in the midst of these kings about the words spoken by the great-souled Dhananjaya, indomitable in spirit, foremost in battle, and the destroyer of the lives of evil-souled ones."

'Sanjaya replied, "Let Duryodhana listen to my words about what Arjuna spoke. The great-souled Dhananjaya is ready for battle. He said this with Yudhishthira's permission and in Keshava's hearing. Knowing the strength of his arms, he does not have the slightest fear. Kiriti is steadfast and ready to do battle. In Vasudeva's presence, he told me, 'Tell Dhritarashtra's son in the midst of the Kurus and in the hearing of the kings who have assembled to kill the Pandavas. Tell them all the words that I have spoken, so that the king[5] and his advisers hear it.' Just as all the gods listen to the words of the king of the gods, the wielder of the vajra, in that way, all the Pandavas[6] and Srinjayas listened to the capable words spoken by Kiriti. 'Arjuna, the wielder of the Gandiva, is ready to do battle.' With eyes like red lotuses, he spoke these words.

""'If Dhritarashtra's son does not give the kingdom to King Yudhishthira Ajamidha,

then it is certain that the evil deeds committed by the sons of Dhritarashtra earlier will remain unaccounted.[7] If there is a desire to fight with Bhima and Arjuna, the sons of the Ashvins[8] and Vasudeva, with Shini's son[9] who has raised his weapons, with Dhrishtadyumna and Shikhandi, with Yudhishthira, who is equal to Indra and can burn up earth and heaven with the ire of his thoughts—if Dhritarashtra's son wishes to fight with these, then all the objectives of the Pandavas will be successful. Do not act so as to ensure the objectives of the Pandavas. Instead, should you so wish, come and fight.[10] Pandava,[11] who acts in accordance with dharma, was banished to the forest and slept on a bed of grief. Dhritarashtra's son will lie down and die on a more miserable bed and that will be his final one. The evil-souled son of Dhritarashtra governed the Kurus and the Pandavas through evil conduct. But he[12] possessed modesty, wisdom, austerities and self-control and conquered his anger through the protection of dharma. Though he was deceived, he was respectful and upright. He possessed austerities, self-control and the protection of dharma. He spoke the truth and was pleasant, even when he was deceived. He endured the infinite hardships. The eldest Pandava has controlled his soul. He has controlled his anger for many terrible years. If that is unleashed on the Kurus, Dhritarashtra's son will repent his decision to fight. When a fire with its black trails is kindled during the summer, it burns down the dry wood. Thus will Yudhishthira's angry and blazing glance burn down the armies of Dhritarashtra's son.

"'When Dhritarashtra's son sees the intolerant Pandava Bhimasena in battle, terrible in speed and with a club in his hand, vomiting the poison of his anger, he will then repent this fight. When he sees Bhima, terrible in form and with a club in his hand, begin to kill, like a mighty lion entering a pen of cows, Dhritarashtra's son will regret this war. He is extremely fearsome and is without fear. He is skilled in the use of weapons. He will slay the assembled enemy forces. He will counter an ocean of chariots on a single chariot. He will destroy a mass of infantry with his club. He will swiftly destroy many soldiers. That brave one will bring down the soldiers of Dhritarashtra's son, like a forest sliced down with an axe. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. Dhritarashtra's son will see his mighty army scattered, like a village that is mostly made of straw burnt by a fire, or ripe grain burnt by lightning. With the foremost warriors dead, the terrified soldiers will be reluctant. They will mostly be in flight, with no one left with any enterprise. They will be burnt by Bhimasena's weapons. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. Nakula, skilled and foremost charioteer among all charioteers, will use his right hand and shoot down hundreds of enemy soldiers. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. Though he was earlier used to happiness, Nakula slept on a bed of unhappiness in the forest for a very long time. He will sigh hard, like an enraged serpent. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. He will see kings who are willing to fight on Dharmaraja's instructions, ride white chariots and attack his soldiers. He will see them abandon his side. Thereafter, Dhritarashtra's son will repent.

The Kourava will see five brave ones, who are children, but not like children in their skill with weapons.[13] They will give up their lives to fight the Kekayas.[14] Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. Sahadeva, the killer, will mount a chariot that is adorned with golden stars. Its wheels make no noise and it is yoked to well-trained horses. He will slice off the heads of kings with floods of arrows. Dhritarashtra's son will see him mounted on the chariot, skilled in the use of weapons, and attacking in all the directions in that extremely fearful war. On seeing him in battle, Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. Sahadeva is spirited and swift to act. He is restrained by modesty, skilled and truthful. He is extremely strong and steadfast in all dharma. He will terribly slaughter soldiers as he finds his way towards the one from Gandhara.[15] When he sees Droupadi's sons, brave and great archers who are skilled in the use of weapons, expert in fighting with chariots, advance in battle, like terrible and poisonous serpents, then will Dhritarashtra's son regret the war. Abhimanyu is the slayer of enemy heroes. He will shower arrows on enemies, like a cloud showering rain. Soubhadra[16] is skilled in the use of his arms and is like Krishna's equal. When he advances, Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. He will see Soubhadra, who is a child, but is not like a child in valour. He will descend on that mass of enemies, like death itself. He is skilled in the use of weapons and is Indra's equal. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war.

"""The young Prabhadrakas are swift to act and skilled.[17] Their valour is like that of lions. They will strike the sons of Dhritarashtra, together with their soldiers. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. The aged Virata and Drupada are maharathas. Each will advance with his soldiers against the enemy, when they see Dhritarashtra's son, together with his soldiers. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. Drupada is skilled in the use of weapons. He will be enraged in battle. Mounted on his chariot, he will use arrows to slice off the heads of younger ones. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. Virata is the slayer of enemy heroes. He will penetrate the enemy army in its weak spots. He will be at the forefront of the Matsyas, who are terrible in form. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. Matysa Virata's eldest son[18] is terrible in form and is foremost among warriors. He has donned armour for the sake of the Pandavas. When he sees him, Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. When Shantanu's virtuous son,[19] foremost among the Kouravas, has been killed in battle by Shikhandi, I tell you truthfully and without any doubt, that none of our enemies will be alive any more. Shikhandi will be on a chariot drawn by celestial horses and protected well. He will advance towards Bhishma on his chariot and will mow down masses of chariots. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. He will see the resplendent Dhrishtadyumna, at the forefront of the Srinjaya forces. The intelligent Drona instructed him about secret weapons.[20] Dhritarashtra's son will repent then. He[21] is the immeasurable general. He will vanquish the sons of Dhritarashtra. He is capable of withstanding enemies and will advance against Drona in battle. Then Dhritarashtra's

son will regret the war. He is modest, learned, strong and intelligent. He is blessed by prosperity and he is foremost among the Somakas.[22] Since our leader is the foremost among the lions of the Vrishni lineage,[23] our enemies will not be able to withstand us. Tell him this also.[24] There is no need to look for anyone else. We have chosen Shini's grandson, Satyaki, as our adviser. He is a charioteer and is without a rival in battle. He is immensely strong, without fear and skilled in the use of weapons. When instructed by me, the lord of the Shinis will shower arrows on the enemy, like a cloud showering rain. He will envelope the warriors with a net of arrows. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. When he desires to fight, he is steady. The great-souled one's arms are long and his bow is firm. The enemies will be like ashes in a fire. They will be like cows that have scented a lion. The great-souled one's arms are long and his bow is firm. He can shatter the mountains and destroy all the worlds. He is skilled in the use of weapons and has dextrous hands. He is radiant like the sun stationed in the firmament. The Yadava, the lion of the Vrishni lineage, is skilled and subtle in his knowledge of the yoga of weapons. He has been instructed in what is said to be the most famous yoga. All the qualities exist in Satyaki's form. Satyaki Madhava's golden chariot is yoked to four white horses. When Suyodhana sees it in the field of battle, the evil one, who has no control over his soul, will repent.

"“‘He will see the chariot studded with gold and gems. It is yoked to white horses and has a monkey on its banner. He will see it, driven in the battle by Keshava. Then the evil one, who has no control over his soul, will repent. The evil-minded one will hear the great sound of Gandiva, as it is brandished by me in that great battle. The sound will be like thunder, when the string of the bow strikes against my wrist guards. Then Dhritarashtra's stupid and evil-minded son, with wicked companions, will regret the war. He will see his soldiers destroyed by that dark shower of arrows in the battle, like a herd of cows. Like lightning emerging from the clouds, they will kill thousands of enemies in the encounter. My arrows will pierce the bones and penetrate the hearts. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. He will see masses of arrows, released from Gandiva's string, descend with sharp tips and destroy horses, elephants and armoured soldiers. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. The evil one will see the arrows of our enemies countered and repulsed by my arrows. They will be obliquely sliced by my arrows with razor tips. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. The arrows released from my arms will strike down the heads of his young warriors, like birds plucking fruit from the top of a tree. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. He will see warriors brought down from chariots, giant elephants and horses. They will be slain and brought down by my arrows in the arena. Then Dhritarashtra's son will regret the war. Like death with a gaping mouth, the flaming shower of arrows released by me will bring down the enemy assassins, the masses of infantry and masses of chariots in every direction. Then the evil-minded one will repent. The dust from my chariot will cover

every direction. He will see his own soldiers completely bewildered, oppressed by Gandiva. After that, the evil-minded one will repent. Duryodhana will see all his soldiers, bereft of their senses, shattered in their limbs and overwhelmed. Their horses, warriors, kings and elephants will be slain. They will be thirsty, exhausted and terrified. Killed, or about to be killed, they will lament piteously. Hair, bones and skulls will be scattered around, as if Prajapati[25] left his work incomplete. On seeing this, the evil-minded one will repent. In that battle, Dhritarashtra's son will see Gandiva, Vasudeva, the divine conch shell Panchajanya, Devadatta, the inexhaustible quivers and me on my chariot.[26] In destroying the Kouravas, in burning that assembled mass of bandits,[27] I will burn like a fire, like the one between the end of a yuga and the onset of another yuga. Then Dhritarashtra's son will repent, together with his sons. Having been overcome by anger, with his brothers, with his sons and with his soldiers, the weak-minded one will see his prosperity destroyed. He will tremble when his insolence has been destroyed. Thereafter, Dhritarashtra's wicked son will repent.

""On an earlier occasion, I had finished my meditations in the morning. When I arose from the water, a brahmana spoke these pleasant words. "O Partha! You will have to perform an extremely difficult task. O Savyasachi! You will have to fight with your enemies. Destroying the enemies, Indra, with the vajra in his hand and drawn by tawny horses, will lead from the forefront in this battle. Alternatively, Krishna Vasudeva will protect your rear, on a chariot yoked to Sugriva."[28] In this battle, I have chosen Vasudeva as my aide, in preference to the great Indra, with the vajra in his hand. I have obtained Krishna so as to slay the dasyus. But I think the gods have ordained this for me. Though he has resolved not to fight, a man whom Krishna wishes to triumph will be victorious over all his enemies, be they Indra with the gods, or men. There is no need to worry. One who wishes to defeat the brave and spirited Vasudeva Krishna in a battle is like one who desires to swim across the ocean, the great store of immeasurable waters, with his bare arms. Mount Shveta is high and lofty with rocks and it is like trying to shatter it with one's arms. The hands, with their nails, will be split. But nothing will happen to the mountain. Instead of vanquishing Vasudeva in battle, one should try to pacify a blazing fire with one's hands, restrain the sun and the moon, or rob the gods of amrita. Alone on a chariot, he destroyed the kingdom of the king and abducted Rukmini of Bhoja.[29] He obtained a resplendent and famous wife and she bore him the great-souled Roukmineya.[30] Having defeated all of Nagnajit's sons, he spiritedly churned Gandhara and forcibly freed Sudarshaniya, beloved of the gods, from bondage.[31] He killed Pandya by striking him on the chest.[32] He vanquished the Kalingas in Dantakura. He burnt down the city of Varanasi, which remained for many years without a protector.[33] He was challenged by Ekalavya, the king of Nishadha, who was thought to be invincible. But Krishna killed him and robbed him of his life, forcefully smashing him against a rock, like Jambha.[34] With Baladeva as a second, he killed Ugrasena's

extremely wicked son,[35] who was radiant in the midst of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas, and returned the kingdom to Ugrasena. He battled Soubha, which travelled in the sky, and the terrible King Shalva, who used maya.[36] At Soubha's gates, he grasped the one who had killed one hundred.[37] Is there any mortal one who can withstand him? There was the terrible and impregnable fortress city Pragjyotisha of the asuras. The extremely strong Naraka, born of the earth, stole Aditi's beautiful and bejewelled earrings. Together with Shakra, the gods tried to get them back. But they could not match him, and fled, terrified. However, they witnessed Keshava's valour and strength and his irresistible weapons. Knowing Keshava's true nature, they entrusted Krishna with the task of killing the dasyus.[38] Vasudeva pledged to perform that extremely difficult task, since he possessed the wealth of success. Piercing with lances and striking with razors, he killed six thousand in Nirmochana. He killed Mura and he killed rakshasa warriors. Then the brave one entered Nirmochana. There, a great battle took place between the immensely strong one[39] and the even stronger Vishnu. He was killed by Krishna and was robbed of his life. He was like a karnikara tree uprooted by the wind. Having regained the bejewelled earrings, having killed the earth-born Naraka and Mura, the wise one was surrounded by prosperity and fame. The one with the unmatched power returned. On witnessing the terrible deed he had wrought in battle, the gods then granted him boons. "When you battle, you will not be overtaken by fatigue. You will face no impediments in the sky and in the water. Weapons will never penetrate your body." Krishna was gratified at these. The immensely strong and immeasurable Vasudeva is like this. He always possesses the qualities. Vishnu is unassailable and infinitely valorous. Dhritarashtra's son wishes to vanquish him. Though the evil-souled one doubts him, looking towards us, he[40] has ignored it. If he thinks that he will be able to engender a quarrel between Krishna and me and make it flourish, and thus become capable of robbing the Pandavas, he will know what is true when he goes to war.

""'I convey my respects to the king who is Shantanu's son, to Drona and his son, and to the unrivalled son of Sharadvat.[41] Wishing to obtain the kingdom, I will fight them. I think that dharma will direct weapons at those who fight against the Pandavas, who have conducted themselves in accordance with dharma. The sons of Pandu were vanquished through deceit by violent ones and have waited for a long period of twelve years, spending a life of hardship, as promised, in the forest. We have lived one year of concealment. While the Pandavas are still alive, how can the sons of Dhritarashtra suddenly rob them of their station? If they conquer us in a battle, with the gods headed by Indra as aides, the practice of adharma will be superior to that of dharma. Then it will be certain that being virtuous is pointless. If he thinks that a man is not bound down by his deeds, and if he does not think that we are superior to him, then, with Vasudeva as a second, I hope to kill Duryodhana and his companions. If a man is tied down by his karma, and even if a man is not tied down by his own karma, looking

towards both of these possibilities, the defeat of Dhritarashtra's son is proper. O Kurus! I am telling you what is evident. The sons of Dhritarashtra will be destroyed in this war. If the Kurus seek to attain their objectives without a war and if they do not fight, they will then survive. Having killed the sons of Dhritarashtra and Karna, I will conquer the entire kingdom of the Kurus. Do whatever you can, according to your capacity. With your wives and your sons, enjoy whatever is sweet. There are aged brahmanas among us. They are extremely learned, and possess virtuous conduct and noble lineage. They are acquainted with the astrology of the years and are certain about the knowledge of the nakshatras, the high and low of the mysteries of destiny, divine questions, *mrigachakra*[42] and muhurtas. They have predicted the victory of the Pandavas and the great destruction of the Kurus and the Srinjayas.[43] Ajatashatru[44] already thinks that success has been obtained in defeating our enemies. Janardana, lion among the Vrishnis, knows what is hidden and does not see any reason for doubt. Without being distracted, I myself know and see the shape of the future. My ancient foresight has not suffered. The sons of Dhritarashtra will die in this war. The Gandiva bow yawns without being touched. Without being touched, the strings of the bow shudder. The arrows jump out from the mouths of the quivers and repeatedly wish to fly out at every instant. My happy steel[45] emerges from its scabbard, like a snake that has discarded its old skin. Terrible voices are heard from my standard, "O Kiriti! When will your chariot be yoked?" Crowds of jackals are howling in the night. Rakshasas fall down from the firmament. Deer, jackals, white-necked ones,[46] crows, vultures, cranes and hyenas are emerging. On seeing my chariot yoked with the white steeds, birds[47] are flying at the back. I will alone shower down arrows and convey the warrior kings to the world of the dead. I will separately despatch each weapon along its route, like a fire that consumes a forest during the summer—Sthunakarna, the terrible Pashupata and Brahmastra[48]—all of which were given to me by Shakra. I will swiftly release them for the sake of slaying. No remnants will be left of any of the beings. I will obtain peace and supreme bliss. O son of Gavalgana![49] Tell them that is my firm resolution. Look at the delusion of Dhritarashtra's son. He seeks to quarrel with those who have always been his aides when he has confronted his enemies, even if the gods, with Indra at the forefront, were on their side.[50] Shantanu's son, the aged Bhishma, Kripa, Drona and his son and the intelligent Vidura—all of them have said this. Let it be that way. Let all the Kurus enjoy long lives."'"

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Vaishampayana said, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When all the kings had assembled, Shantanu's son, Bhishma, spoke these words to Duryodhana. "Once, Brihaspati and Ushanas[51] presented themselves before Brahma. So did Indra with the Maruts, the Vasus, the Ashvins, the Adityas, the Sadhyas, the celestial saptarshis, the

gandharva Vishvavasu and the masses of beautiful apsaras. They bowed in obeisance before the ancient grandfather of the worlds. The denizens of heaven surrounded the lord of the universe. Then the ancient gods, the two rishis Nara and Narayana, departed —as if drawing out the minds and energy of the residents of heaven. Brihaspati asked Brahma, 'O grandfather! Who are these two? Tell us. They do not worship you.' Brahma replied, 'These two ascetics illuminate heaven and earth. They are blazing and resplendent, pervasive and extremely strong. They are Nara and Narayana, who travel from one world to another world. Because of the fruits of their austerities, they possess great energy and valour. Through their deeds, these two certainly bring delight to the worlds. They are worshipped by the gods and the gandharvas, for the destruction of the asuras.' Having heard this, together with the masses of all the gods, with Brihaspati at the forefront, Shakra went to the place where these two were performing their austerities. At that time, the residents of heaven were terrified because of the war between the gods and the asuras. They desired a boon from the great-souled Nara and Narayana. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! They asked Shakra to choose a boon. When he asked for their help, they told Shakra that they would act according to his wishes. With their help, Shakra conquered the daityas and the danavas. In a battle for Indra's cause, Nara, the scorcher of enemies, killed hundreds and thousands of his enemies, the Poulamas and the Kalakhanjas.[52] Stationed on a chariot that whirled around in the field of battle, Arjuna used his arrows to kill Jambha, who was ready to swallow the sacrifice. He penetrated Hiranyapura, which was on the other side of the ocean, after vanquishing sixty thousand Nivatakavachas in battle. This scorcher of enemy cities has vanquished the gods, together with Indra. The mighty-armed Arjuna satisfied the god of fire.[53] In the same way, Narayana killed many others in that battle. Behold! These two immensely valorous ones have arrived as the maharatha warriors Vasudeva and Arjuna. It is said that they are the ancient gods Nara and Narayana. They are invincible in the world of men, and even against Indra, the gods and the asuras. It is said that Narayana is Krishna and Phalguna[54] is Nara. Narayana and Nara are one being, but have been divided into two. They have earned eternal and indestructible worlds because of their deeds. When the time for war has arrived, they are repeatedly born there and here. This is the task that they have to perform. That is what Narada, knowledgeable about the Vedas, told the assembled circle of the Vrishnis. O Duryodhana! O son![55] When you see Keshava with the conch shell, chakra and club in his hands, the terrible archer Arjuna grasping his weapons, and the two eternal and great-souled Krishnas[56] stationed on a single chariot, you will then remember my words. Why else has this destruction of the Kurus presented itself? O son![57] Your intelligence has turned away from dharma and artha. If you do not heed my words, you will hear that many have been killed. All the Kurus pay attention to your inclinations alone. O bull among the Bharata lineage! You follow the instructions of only three people—the

low-born son of a suta, Karna, who was cursed by Rama;[58] Shakuni Soubala; and your mean and wicked brother Duhshasana."

'Karna replied, "O grandfather! You have lived for a long time. You should not speak in this way. I have been established in the dharma of kshatriyas and have not given up my own dharma. What is the evil conduct for which you are censuring me? The sons of Dhritarashtra know that there is no sin in me. Instead, in every deed, I have sought to please King Dhritarashtra and Duryodhana, because he is the one who rules the kingdom."'

Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing Karna's words, Shantanu's son, Bhishma, again spoke to the great king Dhritarashtra. "He always speaks about killing the Pandavas. But he is not a sixteenth part[59] of the great-souled Pandavas. Know that the calamity that is about to confront your evil-souled sons is the work of this evil-minded son of a suta. Your evil-minded son Suyodhana depends on him. He ignores those brave sons of the gods, the destroyers of enemies.[60] What extremely difficult task has he[61] accomplished in the past that can rival any one deed accomplished by any one of the Pandavas earlier? In Virata's city, he saw his own beloved brother killed through Dhananjaya's valour.[62] What did he do then? Dhananjaya attacked all the Kurus together, defeated them and won back the cattle. Was he not there then? In the expedition over the cattle, your son was captured by the gandharvas.[63] The son of a suta is behaving like a bull now. Where was he then? Wasn't it Partha and the great-souled Bhima, together with the twins, who defeated the gandharvas then? O bull among the Bharata lineage! O fortunate one! He is deficient in dharma and artha and has always spoken many such falsehoods." When the great-souled Bharadvaja[64] heard Bhishma's words, he showed his respects to Dhritarashtra in the midst of those kings and said, "O king! O best of the Bharata lineage! Act in accordance with what Bhishma has said. You should not follow the advice of those who are greedy for kama and artha. Before embarking on a battle, I think that we should negotiate with the Pandavas. I know that Pandava Arjuna will do everything that he has spoken in the words reported by Sanjaya. There is no archer who is his equal in the three worlds." But ignoring the superior words spoken by Bhishma and Drona, the king asked Sanjaya about the Pandavas. When the king did not properly answer Bhishma and Drona, all the Kurus lost any hope of remaining alive then.'

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'Dhritarashtra asked, "What did the king, Pandava, Dharma's son, say when he heard that many soldiers had assembled against him? O suta! How is Yudhishthira preparing himself for the war? When he is worried, among his brothers and sons, whose face does he look at? Is there any among them who strives to pacify the war? He is knowledgeable about dharma and follows dharma. However, he has been enraged by

the wicked deceipt."

'Sanjaya replied, "The Panchalas and Pandavas look towards the king's face. O fortunate one! Yudhishthira rules all of them. The separate arrays of chariots of the Pandavas and the Panchalas salute Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, when he arrives. Kounteya's radiant energy is like the sun rising out of darkness and the Panchalas honour this mass of energy. The Panchalas, Kekayas, Matsyas, even cowherds and shepherds, worship Pandava Yudhishthira, who brings them delight. Brahmana women, princesses and the daughters of vaishyas, when they are sporting, assemble to see Partha, when he is clad in his armour."

'Dhritarashtra asked, "O Sanjaya! What forces have the Pandavas gathered against us? How are Dhrishtadyumna and his soldiers? What is the strength of the Somakas?"'

Vaishampayana said, 'Thus questioned in the assembly hall where the Kurus had gathered, Gavalgana's son repeatedly heaved deep sighs and seemed to be lost in thought. Then, as if determined by destiny, the suta fell unconscious. In that assembly hall where the kings had gathered, a man said, "O great king! Sanjaya is unconscious and has fallen down on the ground. He is bereft of his senses and his wisdom and cannot utter a word." Dhritarashtra replied, "Sanjaya has seen the maharatha sons of Kunti. His mind must have been agitated at the sight of those tigers among men." Sanjaya regained consciousness.

'Having been comforted, he told the great king Dhritarashtra in the assembly hall where the Kurus had gathered, "O Indra among kings! I have seen the maharatha sons of Kunti. They are lean because of the restraints they faced while dwelling in the abode of the king of Matsya. O great king! Listen to the ones the Pandavas have gathered against you. There is Ajatashatru, supreme among those who uphold dharma. O great king! He is the one against whom dharma is measured. He has dharma in his soul and never deviates from truth for the sake of anger, fear, desire, objectives, or any other reason. The Pandavas have gathered him against you. The Pandavas have gathered Bhimasena against you. There is no one on earth who is his equal in the strength of arms. That archer brought all the lords of the earth under his suzerainty. After escaping from the house of lac, Vrikodara, Kunti's son, was their protector and saved them from the man-eating Hidimba.[65] When Yajnaseni was abducted by the king of Sindhu, Vrikodara, Kunti's son, was their protector.[66] When all the Pandavas were being burnt in Varanavata, he is the one who freed them.[67] He has been gathered against you. He is the one who killed the Krodhavashas and penetrated the uneven and terrible Mount Gandhamadana in order to please Krishna.[68] The substance and valour of ten thousand elephants is in his arms. He has been gathered against you. The Pandavas have gathered Vijaya[69] against you in battle. In earlier times, with Krishna as a second, the brave and valorous one defeated Purandara in battle and satisfied the god of fire.[70] He satisfied in battle Mahadeva himself, the god of the gods, the consort of Uma, Girisha, the wielder

of the trident.[71] That archer has subjugated all the lords of the world. The Pandavas have gathered Vijaya against you. Nakula is a warrior who uses wonderful weapons in battle. He conquered the western regions, populated by masses of mlecchas. He is brave and handsome and is supreme among archers. O Kouravya! The Pandavas have gathered Madri's son against you. The Pandavas have gathered Sahadeva against you. In battle, he conquered Kashi, Anga, Magadha and Kalinga. There are only four men on earth who are his equal in valour—Ashvatthama, Dhrishtaketu, Pradyumna and Rukmi.[72] The Pandavas have gathered that Sahadeva against you. He is the youngest and a brave one amongst men. He brought delight to Madri. O Kurus! Shikhandi, skilled in the use of weapons, has been gathered against you. In earlier times, she was the daughter of the king of Kashi and performed great austerities, desiring to kill Bhishma.[73] O bull among the Bharata lineage! When she died, she was born as the daughter of Panchala and, by destiny, became a man. O tiger among men! He knows about the qualities and taints of both women and men. That Panchala is unassailable in battle and conquered Kalinga. We have heard that a yaksha turned her into a man for the sake of killing Bhishma. The Pandavas have gathered that terrible and great archer against you. There are five brothers who are Kekaya princes and are great archers. They are warriors with beautiful armour. They have been gathered against you. Yuyudhana,[74] the Vrishni warrior, has long arms and is swift in the use of weapons. He is steadfast and truth is his valour. He is against you. The Pandavas have gathered Virata against you in battle. The great-souled one offered refuge to the Pandavas for some time. The maharatha lord of Kashi, who is king in Varanasi, has become a warrior on their side and has been gathered against you. Though they are children, Droupadi's great-souled sons are invincible in battle. Their touch is like that of virulent serpents and the Pandavas have gathered them against you. The Pandavas have gathered Abhimanyu against you in battle. He is Krishna's equal in valour and Yudhishthira's equal in self-control. The Pandavas have gathered Dhrishtaketu, the king of Chedi, against you. He is unmatched in renown and valour and is immensely famous. That maharatha is invincible when he is enraged in battle and he is Shishupala's son. The Pandavas have gathered Vasudeva against you. He is the refuge of the Pandavas, just as Vasava is of the gods. O bull among the Bharata lineage! They have Sharabha, the brother of the king of Chedi, together with Karakarsha, and have gathered them against you. They have Jarasandha's son, Sahadeva, and Jayatsena. There is the extremely energetic Drupada, with a large army. He is ready to give up his life for the sake of the Pandavas and is gathered against you. These and many other lords of the earth have come from the east and the north. With hundreds of them, Dharmaraja is prepared."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "All the ones that you have named possess great enterprise. But

Bhima alone is equal to all of them together. O son![75] The angry and intolerant Bhimasena creates as great a fear in me, as that of a great *ruru* deer at the sight of a tiger. I am awake throughout the night, letting out deep and warm sighs. O son![76] I am as terrified of Vrikodara as a weak animal is of a lion. This mighty-armed one is Shakra's equal in his energy. I do not see anyone in this army who can withstand him in battle. That intolerant son of Kunti and Pandu is firm in his enmity. He does not smile, even in jest. He is mad. He has a sidelong glance. He has a loud voice. He is great in his speed. He is great in his enterprise. He has mighty arms. He is immensely strong. He will destroy my wicked sons in battle. Vrikodara is a bull in the Kuru lineage. When he brandishes his club in battle, like the god of death wielding his staff, the thighs of the enemies give away. I can see that terrible club in my mind's eye, made of steel[77] and burnished with gold, like Brahma's upraised staff. Like a strong lion wandering around among herds of deer, Bhima will roam around amidst my forces. He is a voracious eater and intolerant. His valour is cruel. Ever since his childhood, alone, he has exhibited violence towards my sons. My heart was upset, when during childhood, Duryodhana and the others were oppressed by him, like a fighting elephant. My sons have always been oppressed by his valour. Bhima, terrible in valour, has been the cause of this dissension. I can see Bhima before me in the field of battle, senseless in rage and devouring arrays of men, elephants and horses. He is the equal of Drona and Arjuna in weapons. His speed is equal to the wind. O Sanjaya! Tell me about the brave and intolerant Bhimasena. I think it was a great gain that this intelligent one, the destroyer of enemies, did not kill all my sons at that time. Through his terrible strength, he has slaughtered yakshas and rakshasas earlier. Which man can withstand his force in battle? O Sanjaya! Even as a child, he was never under my control. How can the Pandava be under my control when my evil sons have made him suffer? He is cruel. Because of that cruelty, he will break, but he will not bend. He has a sidelong glance. His brows are furrowed. How can Vrikodara be pacified? His shoulders are wide. He is irresistible. He is fair and is as tall as a palm tree. In height, Bhimasena is a *pradesha*[78] taller than Arjuna. He surpasses horses in speed. He surpasses elephants in strength. He has a rumble in his voice. The medium Pandava is strong and has eyes that have the complexion of honey. I have earlier heard from the mouth of Vyasa, that the Pandava was like that in form and strength, even when he was a child.[79] Bhima is supreme among warriors. Enraged in battle, he will use his iron club to destroy chariots, elephants, horses and men. He is always intolerant, angry and fearsome. His valour is cruel. O son![80] Because he has acted against my wishes, he has been insulted earlier. That iron club is heavy and decorated with gold. It has excellent sides and excellent rings. It is capable of killing one hundred. When it is swung, with a hundred roars, how will my sons bear it? The ocean known as Bhimasena has no shores. It cannot be crossed and is unfathomable. It is impenetrable. It has the arrows as its waves. O son![81] Only fools can seek to cross it.

Those children think themselves to be learned and do not heed my words. Seeing only the honey, they do not think of the fall that will come. They wish to fight against a wind in the form of a man. The creator controls them, like great deer by a lion. O son![82] The club is made of steel.[83] It is four cubits[84] long and has six sides. It is infinitely energetic. It is terrible to the touch. When it is flung, how will my sons withstand it? He will whirl it around and smash the heads of elephants. He will lick the corners of his mouth and repeatedly shed tears of rage. He will utter a terrible roar when he counters the elephants that attack him. He will roar back at those mad and descending elephants. He will penetrate the paths followed by chariots and destroy the best soldiers. He will blaze like a fire. Which of my sons will escape? The mighty-armed one will carve out a path by driving back my army. He will seem to be dancing, with a club in his hand, as if displaying the end of the era. He will be like a rutting elephant that destroys trees in blossom. In battle, Vrikodara will rout the soldiers of my sons. He will rob chariots of their men and pennants. He will shatter the drums. That tiger among men will dislodge charioteers and riders, like the torrents of the Ganga flooding the banks and uprooting many trees. O Sanjaya! He will destroy the great army of my sons. O Sanjaya! Oppressed by Bhimasena's strength, my sons, their servants and the kings will come under his power. With Vasudeva at his aide, it was he who penetrated the inner quarters of the immensely valorous King Jarasandha, and killed him. This entire goddess earth had been conquered by the strong and intelligent Jarasandha, the Indra of Magadha, who then oppressed her. Because of Bhishma's prowess, the Kurus, and the Andhakas and the Vrishnis, because of their policies, did not come under his[85] sway. Perhaps it was destined that way. With the strength of his arms, Pandu's son swiftly went there. Without any weapons, the brave one killed him. What can be greater than that? He is like a snake that has accumulated its poison for a long time. O Sanjaya! In battle, he will release that energy against my sons. With the club in his hand, Bhimasena will kill my sons, like the great Indra, supreme among the gods, once killed the danavas with the vajra. I can see the irresistible and inevitable Vrikodara, fierce in speed and valour. His eyes are more red than copper and he will descend. Who can stand in front of that man, even if he fights with his bare arms, without a club, without a bow, without a chariot and without armour?

'"Bhishma, the brahmana Drona and Sharadvat's son, Kripa, know about the valour of that intelligent one, just as I do. Knowing the vow of aryas and unwilling to break their agreements, those bulls among men will establish themselves at the forefront of my army. Destiny is always powerful, especially over men. I can see them triumph, but I cannot restrain my sons. Those great archers will station themselves on the ancient path followed by Indra. They will give up their lives in the turmoil and protect their fame on earth. O son![86] The Pandavas are to them just as my sons are. They are Bhishma's grandsons and the pupils of Drona and Kripa. O Sanjaya! Because they are aryas, these

three aged men will certainly repay whatever refuge and gifts we have offered them. When a brahmana takes up weapons and wishes to follow the dharma of kshatriyas, it is said that death is the supreme objective. However, I grieve for all those who wish to fight with the Pandavas. The danger foretold by Vidura at the beginning has now arrived. O Sanjaya! I do not think that knowledge can counter misery. Instead, when sorrow is excessive, it overwhelms knowledge. Even free rishis, who watch over the travails of the world, rejoice at its happiness and sorrow over its unhappiness. Why should I not be affected? I am a thousand times more attached to my sons, my kingdom, my wife, my grandsons and my relatives. I have great doubts about whether I will see supreme peace in the future. I think and see the destruction of the Kurus. This great destruction of the Kurus seems to have started with the game of dice. This evil act was performed by that wicked one out of greed and desire for prosperity. I think that this is the dharma of time, which extends beyond the end. Everyone is affixed, like a rim to a wheel,[87] and no one is capable of running away. O Sanjaya! What can I do? How can I do it? Where will I go? Because they have come under the clutches of time, the wicked Kurus will be destroyed. O son![88] I am helpless before the destruction of one hundred of my sons. I can hear the lamentations of the women. How is death going to touch me? Like a blazing fire during summer is urged by the wind and burns the deadwood, the Pandava will wield the club in his hand, and assisted by Arjuna, will slay my own."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "We have never heard false words from him.[89] He has Dhananjaya as his warrior and can rule over the three worlds. Even though I think about it continually, I do not see any charioteer who can counter the wielder of the Gandiva in battle. He will shoot shafted and hollow arrows that will traverse their paths and penetrate the heart. There is no one who can counter the wielder of the Gandiva in battle. Drona and Karna are brave bulls among men. They may be able to withstand him because of their greatness. But there is no doubt that I will not have victory in this world. Karna is compassionate, but he is rash. The preceptor is senior and aged. The powerful Partha wields a firm bow and has conquered all exhaustion. He is capable of countering them and there will be a terrible battle, with both sides undefeated. All of them are warriors who are knowledgeable about weapons and all of them have attained great fame. They may possess the riches of all the gods, but they will not obtain victory. There can certainly be peace if both of them[90] are killed, or if Phalguna is. But Arjuna's defeat will not happen. Nor is there anyone who can kill him. How can his rage, which has arisen against the wicked ones, be pacified? There are others who know about weapons. They conquer and are conquered. But it has been heard that Phalguna only has victory as the outcome. He challenged the thirty-three gods and satisfied Agni in Khandava. He defeated all the gods. I know of no instance of his defeat. His charioteer

is Hrishikesha, who is his equal in character and conduct. O son![91] His victory is certain, just as Indra's victory is. We have heard that three forces have come together on a single chariot now, the two Krishnas[92] and the stringed Gandiva bow. There is no bow like that, nor a warrior, or a charioteer. But the wicked ones who follow Duryodhana do not know this. O Sanjaya! O son![93] When the blazing thunderbolt descends on the head, it may leave a residue, but the arrows released by Kiriti leave no remnant. I can already see Phalguna blazing forth. He severs the heads from the trunks with his shower of arrows. The energy of his arrows radiates in all the directions. Ignited by Gandiva, they burn down the armies of my sons. They are terrified at the roar of Savyasachi's chariot. I can see the large army of the Bharatas tremble and flee. Like a large fire burns down deadwood and grows and spreads everywhere, with large flames fanned by the wind, he will consume those who are mine. In battle, the assassin Kiriti will release a large number of sharp arrows. He will be like death, who robs everything, and has been ordained by the creator to slaughter everything. I see and hear of many kinds of omens in the abode of the Kurus and around them, before the start of the war. Destruction certainly confronts the Bharatas."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "All the Pandavas are brave and desire victory. Their followers have also resolved to give up their lives and have set their sights on victory. You yourself have spoken about those mighty enemies of mine—the Panchalas, the Kekayas, the Matsyas, the Magadhas and the kings of Vatsa. There is also the powerful one, who if he so wishes, can subjugate all the worlds, together with Indra. Krishna is supreme in the universe and he is also set on victory for the Pandavas. Satyaki swiftly obtained all knowledge from Arjuna.[94] Shini's son will be stationed in the field of battle and will shower arrows, like seeds. Dhrishtadyumna of Panchala is a maharatha and is the performer of cruel deeds. He is strong in the knowledge of supreme weapons and will fight my armies in the war. O son![95] Great fear is generated in me from Yudhishthira's anger, Arjuna's valour and the twins and Bhimasena. Those Indras among men will cast out a superhuman net over my soldiers. O Sanjaya! That is the reason I am lamenting. Pandu's son[96] is handsome and intelligent. He possesses the signs of prosperity and the radiance of brahmanas. He is wise and his insight is excellent. He has dharma in his soul. He is surrounded by excellent friends and advisers and he has horses to yoke and those who will yoke them. His brothers, fathers-in-law and sons are maharathas. The Pandava, tiger among men, possesses fortitude and can maintain secrecy. He is non-violent, generous and modest, and truth is his valour. He is extremely learned and has perfected his soul. He serves the aged and has conquered his senses. He has all the qualities. Which wicked one will burn himself by descending into that kindled fire, like an insect? One with stupid intelligence is certain to die if he doesn't avoid the Pandava's

fire. The king is like a tall and thin flame, with a complexion of pure gold. He will bring about the destruction of my wicked sons in battle. I think that it is best not to fight. O Kurus! Listen to me. If there is a war, it is certain that the entire lineage will be destroyed. This is supreme peace and it will pacify my mind. If you do not wish for war, let us try for peace. If you try for this, Yudhishthira will not ignore you. He abhors adharma and blames me as having been the cause."'

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'Sanjaya said, "O great king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is exactly as you have said. It can be seen that Gandiva will destroy the kshatriyas in battle. You have always been wise. But I do not know how, despite knowing the spirit of Savyasachi, you have allowed yourself to be controlled by your sons. O great king! There is no time now. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Right from the beginning, you yourself have always maltreated the Parthas. A father who guides with his heart is always the best well-wisher. He should practise what is beneficial. One who disregards this cannot be called a superior. O great king! When you heard that they had been defeated at the game of dice, you laughed like a child and exclaimed, 'We have won! We have gained!' When harsh words were addressed towards the Parthas earlier, you ignored them. Though you knew that they had conquered the kingdom for themselves, you did not foresee your own downfall. O great king! Only the ancestral kingdom and Kurujangala are yours. It was only later that you obtained the entire earth, when those brave ones conquered it. The Parthas won the earth with the valour of their arms and handed it over to you. O supreme among kings! But you think that you obtained it yourself. O supreme among kings! When your sons were grasped by the king of the gandharvas and were drowning in a sea without bows, it was the Parthas who brought them back. O king! You laughed like a child when the Pandavas were deceitfully defeated in the game of dice and had to repeatedly roam around in the forest. When Arjuna showers his many sharp arrows, even the oceans dry up, not to speak of those who are born from flesh. Phalguna is the best among archers. Gandiva is supreme among bows, Keshava among all beings, Sudarshana[97] among all chakras. Among all standards, the standard that bears the monkey is supreme.[98] The one with the white steeds will bear these on his chariot in the field of battle and destroy us. O king! He will fling us away, like the upraised wheel of time. O king! O bull among the Bharata lineage! The entire earth now belongs to him. O supreme among kings! He who has Bhima and Arjuna as his warriors, is the king. Attacked by Bhima, your army will be almost submerged. With Duryodhana at the forefront, the Kouravas will see this and confront destruction. O great king! Your sons, and the kings who follow them, will be oppressed by fear of Bhima. O lord! They will not be victorious. The Matsyas no longer revere you, nor do the Panchalas and the Kekayas. All the Shalveyas and Shurasenas hate you and have gone over to the Parthas,

knowing the valour of that intelligent one.[99] They are united with dharma and do not deserve to be killed or injured. That evil man,[100] together with his followers, must be restrained in every way. O great king! You should not grieve over your son. At the time of the game with the dice, I told you, and so did the intelligent Vidura. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O Indra among kings! All your lamentations about the Pandavas, as if you are incapable, are pointless."'

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'Duryodhana said, "O great king! Do not be frightened. Do not sorrow on our account. O king! O lord! We are capable of defeating our enemies in war. When the Parthas were exiled to the forest, Madhusudana went to them with a large army that had subjugated the kingdoms of enemies. The Kekayas, Dhrishtaketu, Parshata Dhrishtadyumna and many other kings followed the Parthas. The maharathas assembled, not far away from Indraprastha. Having assembled together, they censured you, together with the Kurus. Yudhishthira was near them, seated on an antelope skin. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! With Krishna at the forefront, they showed him homage. The kings said that he should act so as to take back the kingdom. They desired to uproot you, together with your followers. O king! O bull among the Bharata lineage! When I heard this, I was scared that my relatives would be destroyed and told Bhishma, Drona and Kripa then, 'It is my view that the Pandavas will stick to the time they have agreed to. Vasudeva desires that we should be completely exterminated. It is my view that, with the exception of Vidura, all of you great-souled ones will be slain. Dhritarashtra is knowledgeable about dharma. That supreme among Kurus cannot be slain. O father![101] Having uprooted all of us entirely, Janardana wishes to hand over the entire kingdom of the Kurus to Yudhishthira. Has the time come for submission and running away? Will we fight against the enemy and give up our lives? If we fight against them, defeat will certainly be ours, because all the lords of the earth are under Yudhishthira's suzerainty. The kingdom is dissatisfied with us and all our friends are enraged. We are being censured by all the kings and all our relatives. There is no taint in submitting to our relatives for an eternal period. But I grieve for my father. He is a lord of men and has wisdom as his sight. Is it because of my deeds that he faces this unhappiness and endless hardships. Indeed, your sons restrained the others in order to bring me pleasure. O supreme among men! You have always known this from earlier times. Driven by enmity and revenge, the maharatha Pandavas will exterminate the lineage of King Dhritarashtra and his advisers.' O descendant of the Bharata lineage! At that, on seeing that I was extremely worried, with my senses tortured, Drona, Bhishma, Kripa and Drona's son replied, 'O scorcher of enemies! There is nothing to fear if we are attacked by others. O lord of men! The others are not capable of vanquishing us in battle. Each one of us is alone capable of vanquishing all the lords of the earth. Let them advance.

We will demolish their pride with sharp arrows. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In earlier times, when his father had died, the angry Bhishma had defeated all the lords of the earth, alone on a single chariot. Enraged, the best of the Kuru lineage had killed many of them and terrified, they had sought refuge with Devavrata.[102] When supported by us in battle, Bhishma is alone capable of defeating the enemy. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Therefore, give up your fear.' At that time, this was the determination of these infinitely energetic ones. In earlier times, the entire earth was under the control of the enemies.

'"They are now incapable of defeating us in battle. The enemies have lost their allies and the Pandavas have lost their valour. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The earth is now under our subjugation. The kings have joined with us, in happiness and in grief. O scorcher of enemies! For my sake, all the kings are prepared to enter the fire and the ocean. O supreme among the Kuru lineage! You should know this. They are laughing at you because of your grief and your many terrified lamentations when you praise the enemy, thinking you to be mad. Each of these kings is alone capable of countering the Pandavas. Each one thinks that to be true of himself. Dispel your fear. Even Vasava is incapable of vanquishing our entire army. It cannot be destroyed even by Brahma, the one who created himself. O lord! Yudhishthira is frightened of my army and my prowess. Earlier, he only asked for five villages.

'"You think Kunti's son, Vrikodara, to be capable. But that has no basis. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! You do not know my prowess. There is no one on earth who is my match in fighting with the club. There has never been an equal and there will never be one. I undertook a lot of hardships to reach those shores of learning. Therefore, I have nothing to fear from Bhima, or anyone else. O fortunate one! When I studied under him, Samkarshana[103] said, 'It is certain that there is no one who is equal to Duryodhana in wielding the club.' I am Samkarshana's equal in battle. And in might, I am his superior on earth. Bhima will not be able to withstand the blows of my club in battle. O king! With one angry, severe and swift blow, I will dispatch Bhima to Vaivasvata's[104] domain. O king! I wish to see Vrikodara with the club in his hand. This has been my wish and the desire of my heart for a very long time. Slain by my club, Partha Vrikodara will fall down lifeless on the ground, with his body shattered. Struck by the force of my club, even the Himalaya Mountains will shatter into one hundred thousand pieces. He[105] knows it, and so do Vasudeva and Arjuna—there is no one equal to Duryodhana in fighting with the club. Therefore, shed your fear of Vrikodara in the great battle. O king! I will kill him. Do not be distracted.

'"O bull among the Bharata lineage! After he has been slain by me, many charioteers who are Arjuna's equal or superior will swiftly overpower him. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Drona's son, Karna, Bhurishrava, the lord of Pragjyotisha, Shalya and Jayadratha, the king of Sindhu—each one of them is alone

capable of killing the Pandavas. They will swiftly despatch them to Yama's abode. Why should the soldiers of all the kings be unable to defeat Partha Dhananjaya alone? That is not reasonable. Hundreds and thousands of arrows showered by Bhishma, Drona, Drona's son and Kripa will despatch Partha to Yama's abode. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The grandfather[106] was born from Ganga and Shantanu and is like a brahmarshi, difficult for even the gods to overcome. His father was pleased and told him, 'You will not die unless you wish to do so.' Drona was born in a wooden vessel, from the brahmarshi Bharadvaja. O great king! Drona's son, supremely skilled in the use of weapons, has been born from Drona. Kripa is foremost among preceptors and was born through maharshi Goutama in a clump of reeds. I think that this illustrious one cannot be killed. These three, Ashvatthama's father, mother and maternal uncle, were not born from human wombs.[107] O great king! That brave one is also on my side. O great king! All these maharathas are the equals of the gods. O bull among the Bharata lineage! In a battle, they can even oppress Shakra. In my view, Karna is the equal of Bhishma, Drona and Kripa. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Rama[108] has told him that he is his equal. Karna possessed beautiful and radiant earrings that he was born with. The great Indra obtained these from the scorcher of enemies for the sake of Shachi.[109] O great king! He obtained a supreme, terrible and infallible spear in return. When struck by that spear, how can Dhananjaya survive? O king! My victory is certain, like a fruit in my hand. The complete defeat of our enemies on earth is certain.

'"O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On a single day, Bhishma alone will kill ten thousand. Drona, Drona's son and Kripa are great archers who are his equal. O scorcher of enemies! The band of *samshaptaka* kshatriyas[110] have resolved, 'Arjuna will kill us, or we will kill Dhananjaya.' O lord! The kings think that they are capable of killing Savyasachi. O king! Why do you then suffer from this grief? O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When Bhimasena has been killed, which of the others will continue to fight? O scorcher of enemies! If you know of anyone amongst the enemy, tell me about him. There are the five brothers, Dhrishtadyumna and Satyaki. O king! These seven warriors are the prime strength of the enemy. O lord of the earth! But our superior ones are Bhishma, Drona, Kripa and the others—Drona's son, Vaikartana Karna, Somadatta, Bahlika, the king of Pragjyotisha, Shalya, the king of Avanti, Jayadratha, Duhshasana, Durmukha, Duhsaha, Shrutayu, Chitrasena, Purumitra, Vivimshati, Shala, Bhurishrava and your son Vikarna. O king! I have assembled eleven akshouhinis. With seven, the enemy has fewer. How can there be defeat? Brihaspati has said that an army that is weaker by one-third, can be fought. O king! My soldiers outnumber the enemy by one-third. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I see that the enemy lacks in many qualities. O lord of the earth! I see that we possess many qualities. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On knowing all this, the superiority of our army and the inferiority of the Pandavas, you should not be prey to this confusion."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Having spoken thus, that destroyer of enemy cities questioned Sanjaya again, because he wished to know about what was appropriate for the time.'

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'Duryodhana said, "O Sanjaya! Kounteya Yudhishthira has obtained seven akshouhinis. Together with the kings, what does he plan to do in preparation for the war?"

'Sanjaya replied, "O king! In great happiness, Yudhishthira is preparing for the war. Bhimasena, Arjuna and the twins are not scared. Bibhatsu Kounteya has yoked his divine chariot and, invoking mantras, is radiating in all the directions. We have seen him ready, like a cloud tinged with lightning. After invoking the mantras, he happily told me, 'O Sanjaya! Behold the portents. We will be victorious.' Bibhatsu told me this and I also saw this to be true."

'Duryodhana said, "You happily praise the Parthas, who were defeated in the game of dice. Tell me. What kind of chariot does Arjuna possess? What is the nature of his standard?"

'Sanjaya replied, "O lord of the earth! O lord! Together with Shakra, Tvashta and the creator, Bhouvana thought of and created many beautiful things.[111] With their celestial maya, they created many beautiful forms for the standard—extremely expensive, celestial, heavy and light. In all directions, sideways and upwards, his standard is one yojana long. It is not entangled, even if it is surrounded by trees. Such is the maya that Bhouvana has created. Shakra's bow[112] sparkles in the sky in many hues and we do not know what it is. Such is the standard that Bhouvana has created. It can be seen in many forms. From a fire, smoke ascends up into the sky. It has energy as its body, but has many forms. Such is the standard that Bhouvana has created. It has no weight and it does not face any impediments. He has excellent and white horses that are as fleet as the wind. They are divine and a gift from Chitraratha.[113] Even when some are killed, one hundred will always remain. This was the boon that was granted earlier. The king[114] has large and ivory-coloured horses yoked to his chariot, a match for his valour. In battle, Bhimasena has mounts that are as swift as the wind and have the hue of antelopes. Sahadeva has mounts with speckled bodies, with backs that have the colour of partridges. In affection and delight, his brother Phalguna gave them to him. These horses are superior to those of his brave brother. Madri's son, Nakula Ajamidha,[115] has supreme and bay horses that were given by the great Indra. They are equal to the wind in strength and speed and they bear the brave one, like Indra, the slayer of Vritra. There are horses that are their equal in age and valour. They are well trained and have no equals in their speed. They bear Subhadra's son and Droupadi's sons. These are large horses that were given by the gods."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "O Sanjaya! Whom else did you see assembled there, to fight for the sake of the Pandavas against the army of my sons?"

'Sanjaya replied, "I saw Krishna, the foremost of the Andhakas and the Vrishnis arrive, and Chekitana and Yuyudhana Satyaki. These two maharathas pride themselves on their manliness and have joined the Pandavas with one akshouhini each. The king of Panchala came, surrounded by one akshouhini and his ten brave sons, Satyajit and the others, with Dhrishtadyumna at the forefront. Drupada increased their fame and they are protected by Shikhandi. He covered the bodies of all his soldiers.[116] Virata arrived with his sons, Shankha and Uttara, with Suryadatta and the other brave ones, Madirashva leading the way. The lord of the earth was surrounded by his brothers and sons and joined the Parthas, surrounded by one akshouhini of soldiers. Jarasandha's son from Magadha and Dhrishtaketu, the king of Chedi, arrived, each followed and surrounded by one akshouhini. All the five brothers from Kekaya, with red standards, were surrounded by one akshouhini and joined the Pandavas. These are the numbers that I saw assembled there, for the sake of the Pandavas, and wishing to fight with the army of the sons of Dhritarashtra. The immensely intelligent Dhrishtadyumna is the army's general. He knows about the battle formations used by men, gods, gandharvas and asuras. O king! Shikhandi has been given the task of killing Bhishma, Shantanu's son. He will be supported by Virata and the warriors from Matsya. The powerful king of Madra has been assigned to the eldest son of Pandu.[117] But there were some who held the view that the two are mismatched. Duryodhana, with his sons and one hundred brothers, and the kings who have come from the east and the south, are Bhimasena's share. It has been held that Arjuna's share is Vaikartana Karna, Ashvatthama, Vikarna and Jayadratha, the king of Sindhu. Partha Arjuna has also accepted as his share all those on earth who pride themselves on their bravery and think themselves to be invincible. The five great archers, the princes from Kekaya, have accepted as their share the Kekayas who will fight in the battle.[118] The Malavas, Shalvas and Kekayas are part of their share too, as are the two foremost ones from Trigarta who are samshaptakas.[119] All of Duryodhana and Duhshasana's sons have been accepted by Subhadra's son as his share, and also King Brihadbala.[120] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! With Dhrishtadyumna at the forefront, the mighty archers who are Droupadi's sons and have standards decorated with gold, will attack Drona. Chekitana wishes to fight Somadatta in a duel of chariots. Yuyudhana wishes to fight with Kritavarma, from the Bhoja lineage. Madri's brave son Sahadeva, who roars in battle, has accepted as his share the task of killing your brother-in-law, the son of Subala.[121] The deceitful Uluka and the masses of Sarasvatas have been thought of as the share of Nakula, Madri's son. O king! There are other kings who will fight in the battle. The sons of Pandu have assigned them, depending on who challenges whom. This is the way in which the army has been

divided into parts. You and your son must do whatever has to be done, swiftly."

'Dhritarashtra said, "All my sons are stupid. They are deceitful gamblers. They are lost, because they will have to fight the powerful Bhima in the forefront of the battle. All the kings of the earth have been assigned according to the dharma of time. They will enter the fire of Gandiva, like insects entering a flame. I can see my enemy destroyed by those great-souled ones, who have been made enemies. In a battle, who will follow those who have been shattered by the Pandavas in a fight? All of them are brave atirathas.[122] They are famous in their deeds and powerful. Each is equal in energy to the sun and the fire. They are victorious in battle. Yudhishthira is their leader and they are protected by Madhusudana. Those two brave Pandavas, Savyasachi and Vrikodara, Nakula, Sahadeva, Parshata Dhrishtadyumna, Satyaki, Drupada, Dhrishtadyumna's son, Uttamouja from Panchala, the invincible Yudhamanyu, Shikhandi, Kshatradeva, Virata's son Uttara, those from Kashi, Chedi and Matsya, all the Srinjayas, Virata's son Babhru, the Panchalas and the Prabhadrakas, from whom Indra himself cannot steal the earth if they are unwilling—all of these are brave ones who are steady in war. They can shatter the mountains. All these are powerful men who possess all the qualities. O Sanjaya! While I grieve, these are the ones my wicked sons wish to fight."

'Duryodhana said, "Both the sides come from the same lineage. Both the sides walk on earth. Why do you then think that only the Pandavas can be victorious? The grandfather,[123] Drona, Kripa, the invincible Karna, Jayadratha, Somadatta and Ashvatthama are extremely intelligent and great archers. O father! Forget the Pandavas. Even the immortals, led by Indra, are incapable of vanquishing them in a fight. O father! The brave Pandavas are aryas in conduct, they are like the fire. But the entire earth is on my side and against them. The Pandavas are incapable of even looking at my army. I am sufficiently powerful to challenge the Pandavas, together with their sons, in a battle. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! All these kings wish to do that which ensures me pleasure. They will restrain them, like deer caught in a net. Through my great collection of chariots and net of arrows, the Panchalas and the Pandavas will be subjugated."

'Dhritarashtra said, "O Sanjaya! My son is raving like a lunatic. He will not be able to vanquish Dharmaraja Yudhishthira in battle. Bhishma has always known how famous the great-souled Pandavas are, their knowledge of dharma and their strength, together with that of their sons. That is the reason I do not wish to fight with those great-souled ones. O Sanjaya! But tell me again about their efforts. Who is igniting the swift Pandavas? They are great and flaming archers. Who is offering oblations into those who are like fire?"

'Sanjaya said, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Dhrishtadyumna always incites them and says, 'O supreme among the Bharata lineage! Fight and do not be frightened of the war. There are kings who have surrounded Dhritarashtra's son and will assemble

in that tumultuous battle, like a lake of armour. Those angry ones will gather for that battle, with their followers. But I alone will devour them, like a whale devours fish in the ocean. I will restrain Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Karna, Drona's son, Shalya and Suyodhana—just as the shoreline restrains the abode of the sharks.'[124] When he spoke in this way, King Yudhishthira, with dharma in his soul, told him, 'The Panchalas and the Pandavas together depend on your fortitude and valour in this war. Save all of us in this battle. O mighty-armed one! I know that you are always established in the dharma of kshatriyas. You are alone capable of countering the belligerent Kouravas. O scorcher of enemies! Whatever you decide, will be for our welfare. There are those who are shattered and running away from the field of battle, seek refuge. It is better to purchase a man who stands his ground and shows his valour and manliness than one thousand of those others. You know that policy. O bull among men! You are courageous. You are brave. You are valorous. There is no doubt that you are the saviour of those who are frightened in battle.' When Kounteya Yudhishthira, with dharma in his soul, spoke these words, without any fear, Dhrishtadyumna addressed me in this way. 'O suta! Tell all those who have come as Duryodhana's warriors from different countries—Bahlikas, Kurus who are descended from Pratipa's lineage, the Sharadvats, the son of the suta, Drona and his son, Jayadratha, Duhshasana, Vikarna, King Duryodhana and Bhishma. Without any delay, go swiftly and tell them this. It is best that you come to peace with Yudhishthira. Otherwise, Arjuna, protected by the gods, will kill you. Swiftly give Pandava, the brave one in the world, what he wants. There is no warrior on earth who is Savyasachi Pandava's equal. He is supreme in the use of weapons in the proper way. The celestial chariot of the wielder of the Gandiva is protected by the gods. No man can defeat him. Do not even think about fighting against him.'"'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "Since his childhood, the brahmachari Pandava has possessed the energy of kshatriyas. Despite my lamentations, these stupid ones wish to fight him. O Duryodhana! O best of the Bharata lineage! Refrain from war. O destroyer of enemies! There are no circumstances under which war is praised. Together with your advisers, half the earth should be enough for you to live on. O destroyer of enemies! Give Pandu's sons what is due to them. All the Kurus think that it is in accordance with dharma that you should make peace with the great-souled sons of Pandu. O son! Look at the different constituents of your army. This has been created for your detriment. But because of your folly, you do not realize this. I do not want a war. Nor does Bahlika want it. Nor do Bhishma, Drona, Ashvatthama, Sanjaya, Somadatta, Shalya, Kripa, Satyavrata, Purumitra, Jaya and Bhurishrava desire war. When they are oppressed by enemies, these are the ones the Kurus seek refuge with. O son! They do not applaud this war and you should find that acceptable. You yourself do not desire it. Karna is making you do

this, and Duhshasana, with evil in his soul, and Shakuni Soubala."

'Duryodhana replied, "When I challenge them, I am not placing the burden of the war on you, Drona, Ashvatthama, Sanjaya, Vikarna, Kamboja, Kripa, Bahlika, Satyavrata, Purumitra, Bhurishrava, or any of the others on your side. O father! Karna and I will perform this sacrifice of the war. O bull among the Bharata lineage! We have been consecrated and Yudhishthira will be the sacrificial animal. The chariot will be the altar, the sword will be the ladle, the club will be the larger ladle and the armour will be the assisting priests. The horses will be the four officiating priests. The arrows will be the *darbha* grass. Fame will be the oblations. O king! Having sacrificed ourselves to Vaivasvata[125] in this war, we will return in triumph, having slain our enemies and surrounded by prosperity. O father! Three of us—Karna, my brother Duhshasana and I, will kill the Pandavas in battle. I will kill the Pandavas and rule over this earth. Or the sons of Pandu will enjoy the earth after having killed me. O king! I can give up my life, my riches and my kingdom. O king! O one without decay! But I cannot live together with the Pandavas. O venerable one! I will not give up to the Pandavas as much of land as can be pricked with the point of a sharp needle."

'Dhritarashtra said, "O son! I sorrow for all you kings who are following this stupid one to the eternal world of Vaivasvata. Duryodhana has been disowned by me. These supreme warriors will be like tigers among herds of ruru deer. The Pandavas will gather together and kill the best of your warriors. It seems to me that the army of the Bharatas is like a frightened woman who has fallen down and has been molested by one with long arms. Increasing the overflowing strength that Partha already possessed, Shini's son, Madhava,[126] will station himself in the field of battle, showering arrows like seeds. Bhimasena will be at the forefront of the army and he will be a rampart, behind which, all of them will fearlessly seek refuge. When you see the elephants brought down by Bhima in battle, their tusks shattered, their temples broken and blood oozing, they will seem to be like splintered mountains. When you are frightened at Bhima's touch, you will then remember my words. You will see your army burned down by Bhimasena. The charioteers and elephants will be slain. You will see that destruction, like the trail of a fire, and remember my words. If you do not have peace with the Pandavas, you will confront a great danger. You will find peace only when Bhimasena kills you with the club. When you see the army of the Kurus brought down in battle, like a large forest that has been destroyed, you will then remember my words."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O great king! After the king had spoken in this way to all the kings, he again turned to Sanjaya and asked him …'

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'Dhritarashtra asked, "What did those two great-souled ones, Vasudeva and Arjuna, say? O immensely wise one! Tell me. I wish to listen to your words."

'Sanjaya said, "O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Listen to me and I will tell you how I found Krishna and Dhananjaya and what those two brave ones said. O king! After purifying myself, I entered the quarters of those gods among men, looking at my toes and joining my hands in salutation. Abhimanyu and the twins are not allowed entry into the abode where the two Krishnas, and Krishna[127] and the beautiful Satyabhama, reside. Both of them were drunk with liquor and both had their bodies smeared with sandalwood. They wore garlands, excellent garments and were adorned with divine ornmanets. The two destroyers of enemies were seated on a large and golden couch, which was covered with many carpets. I saw that Keshava's feet were on Arjuna's lap, while the great-souled Arjuna's were on Krishna and Satya.[128] Partha pointed out a golden footstool to me. After touching it with my hands, I seated myself on the ground.[129] When Partha removed his feet from the footstool, I saw two longitudinal auspicious marks on the soles of his pure feet. Having seen those two dark, large and young men seated on the same seat, like the trunks of shala trees, I was struck by great fear. They were like Indra and Vishnu together. The evil-souled one[130] does not understand this, because he depends on Drona and Bhishma and listens to Karna's bragging. Since these two obeyed Dharmaraja's instructions, I became convinced in my mind that his desires would be met. Having been honoured with food and drink and a garment, and having been shown respect, I placed my hands on my head[131] and conveyed the message. Partha's hand bore the auspicious marks made by a bow and arrows. With this, he nudged Keshava's feet, prompting him to reply. Krishna is like Indra in his valour. He was adorned with all the ornaments and he was as upright as Indra's standard. The most eloquent of speakers spoke these words. They were appropriate and pleasant words. But though they were mild, they were extremely terrible and frightening for Dhritarashtra's sons. I listened to the words of the one who should be heard. The syllables were trained and clear. They were meant for everyone's welfare. But at the end, they dried up my heart."

'"Vasudeva said, 'O Sanjaya! In the presence of the foremost among the Kurus and in Drona's hearing, speak these words to the intelligent Dhritarashtra. "Offer a large number of sacrifices and donate stipends to the brahmanas. Enjoy yourselves with your sons and wives. A great danger confronts you. Distribute your riches among deserving ones. Have sons born out of love. Do good deeds towards those you love. The king[132] will soon be victorious. That old debt is still impaled in my heart, because I have not repaid it. When I was far away, Krishna cried out, 'Govinda!'[133] Savyasachi's Gandiva bow is full of power and is invincible. He has an enmity with you and that is the reason I am helping him now. With me as an aide, who wishes to challenge Partha, even if it were to be Purandara himself, unless because of destiny, his time has come? He can raise the earth with his arms. He can angrily burn down these beings. He can dislodge the thirty gods from heaven. Who can defeat Arjuna in battle? Among the gods, asuras,

men, yakshas, gandharvas and serpents, I do not see anyone who is capable of withstanding the Pandava in battle. An extraordinary wonder in the city of Virata is spoken about and is sufficient example, when a single one was enough to counter many. Faced with Pandu's son alone in the city of Virata, they were shattered and fled in all the directions. This is sufficient example. Such strength, valour, energy, speed, dexterity of hand, perseverance and fortitude are found in no one other than Partha.""

'Sanjaya said, "Thus spoke Hrishikesha, delighting Partha with words that roared like the chastiser of Paka[134] in the sky, when it is the time for rains. After having heard Keshava's words, Kiriti Arjuna, the one with the white horses, himself spoke words that were extremely terrifying."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'The lord of men possessed the eyesight of wisdom. Having heard Sanjaya's words, he began to consider the pros and cons of the war. The intelligent one considered them in detail, the good and the bad. He reflected on them, wishing for victory for his sons. The intelligent lord of men reflected on the strengths and the weaknesses, the powers of the two sides in battle. He concluded that the Pandavas possessed superior strength and energy, both divine and human and that the Kurus were weaker in strength.

'He addressed Duryodhana. "O Duryodhana! This anxiety does not leave my mind. I know this to be the truth, and do not deduce it from my imagination. All beings have excessive affection towards their sons and, according to capacity, do everything to please them and ensure their welfare. In a similar way, it is usually seen that those who have been benefited wish to bring great pleasure to their benefactors in return. Therefore, remembering the good deeds performed by Arjuna in Khandava, Agni will help him in the terrible encounter between the Kurus and the Pandavas. Dharma and many other residents of heaven will be invoked and be on the side of the Pandavas, out of affection for their sons. Desiring to protect them from the fear of Bhishma, Drona, Kripa and the others, I think that their wrath will be ignited, like lightning. The Parthas are tigers among men. They have human valour and are skilled in the use of weapons. With the gods as their aides, they cannot be repulsed. He possesses the supreme and celestial bow Gandiva, which is irresistible. He has Varuna's divine and great inexhaustible quivers, always filled with arrows. He possesses the monkey on his celestial standard, which blazes trails of smoke. His chariot has no equal in the four corners of earth. It has the roar of a giant cloud and when men hear its giant, fearful and thunderous roar, the enemies are terrified. The worlds know him for his superhuman valour. The kings know him to be one who can vanquish the gods in battle. He has been seen to grasp five hundred arrows and release them in an instant, so that they descend a long distance away. Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Drona's son, King Shalya of

Madra and men who are neutral declare that when Partha is stationed in battle, even superhuman kings cannot counter him. He is a tiger among men and is a destroyer of enemies. In a single burst, he unleashes five hundred swift arrows. The Pandava is Kartavirya's[135] equal in the valour of his arms. This Arjuna is a great archer and is protected by the great Indra and Upendra.[136] I see us being slaughtered by him in the great battle. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I think about these things throughout day and night. I remain sleepless and without happiness, thinking about peace for the Kurus. A great destruction has presented itself before the Kurus. O son! I have always favoured peace with the Parthas, and not this war. I have always thought that the Pandavas have greater strength than the Kurus."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing his father's words, Dhritarashtra's intolerant son was extremely angered and again said, "O supreme among kings! If you think that the Parthas cannot be countered because they are helped by the gods, throw away your fears. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The gods obtained their divinity because they are impervious to love, hatred, malice and avarice and because they ignore all sentiments. Dvaipayana Vyasa and the immensely ascetic Narada have told us this in earlier times, and so has Rama, Jamadagni's son.[137] O bull among the Bharata lineage! The gods never act like humans, driven by love, hatred, malice and avarice. If Agni, Vayu, Dharma, Indra and the Ashvins favour the Parthas because of their affection, they would not have faced hardships.[138] Therefore, you should not have any worries on this account. The gods always ignore sentiments that have nothing to do with divine affairs. Their divinity would be called into question if the gods were seen to be motivated by love, hatred and avarice. When the fire wishes to burn the worlds and surrounds them in all the directions, wishing to burn them down, I can invoke mantras and it praises me. The energy that the residents of heaven possess is supreme. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! But the gods cannot match me and they know it. O king! While the worlds look on, with my mantras, I can establish the shattered mountains and summits of the earth. When the sensate and insensate, the mobile and immobile, face destruction and there is a terrible and large roar, with a shower of rocks and a gale, driven by compassion for all beings, I can pacify everything, while the universe looks on. Chariots and infantry can march over the water I have solidified. I am the one who directs the affairs of the gods and the asuras. When I go with my akshouhinis to any country, whatever be the reason, there the waters follow my instructions and my desires. O king! There is no fear from snakes and other beings within my dominion. When beings are asleep, they do not face terrible violence. O king! Parjanya[139] showers down on those who reside there, without their asking for it. All the subjects are based on dharma and they are not afflicted by anything. The Ashvins, Vayu, Agni, the Maruts, the slayer of Vritra and

Dharma are unable to protect those whom I hate. If they had been capable of saving my enemies with their great powers, the Parthas would not have endured unhappiness for thirteen years. I tell you truthfully. The gods, the gandharvas, the asuras and the rakshasas are not capable of saving the ones whom I hate. It has never been the case that the good and evil I respectively wish to bestow on both my friends and enemies have failed to materialize. O scorcher of enemies! Whatever I have mentioned as inevitable, has never failed to happen. That is the reason I am known as one who speaks the truth. The world is a witness to my greatness and it is famous everywhere. O king! I have said all this to reassure you and not because I wish to praise myself. O king! I have never indulged in self-praise earlier. One who praises one's own self is inferior. You will hear that I have defeated the Pandavas, together with the Matsyas, Panchalas, Kekayas, Satyaki and Vasudeva. Rivers are destroyed when they reach the ocean. Like that, they and their followers will be destroyed when they reach me. I possess supreme intelligence. I possess supreme energy. My valour is supreme. I possess supreme learning. I possess supreme yoga. All these distinguish me over them. Whatever the grandfather,[140] Drona, Kripa, Shalya and Shala know about weapons—all that is vested in me." O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Having spoken thus, wishing to fight, the scorcher of enemies questioned Sanjaya, to determine the time to accomplish different tasks.'

724(61)

Vaishampayana said, 'Disregarding Vichitravirya's son,[141] who kept reflecting on the Parthas, Karna addressed Dhritarashtra's son[142] in the assembly of Kouravas, so as to cheer him up. "In earlier times, when Rama found that I had obtained the brahmastra weapon from him under false pretences, he told me, 'When your end has come, it will not appear before you.'[143] The maharshi possessed fierce energy and was capable of burning up the entire earth, along with her oceans. I had committed a grave crime. But even when the maharshi imposed that grave curse, he did it pleasantly. Because of my servitude and manliness, his mind was gratified by me. I still possess the weapon and I still have some life left. Therefore, the burden is mine and I am capable of bearing it. Through the favours of the rishi, I will kill the Panchalas, the Karushas and the Matsyas in an instant. I will kill the Parthas, with their sons and grandsons. I will give you the worlds I will obtain with my weapons. Let grandfather,[144] Drona and all the foremost among kings stay with you. I will go with the best soldiers and kill the Parthas. That is my burden." While he was saying this, Bhishma responded, "What are you saying? Your intelligence has been numbed by destiny. O Karna! Do you not know that once the foremost ones have been killed, Dhritarashtra's sons will be dead? With Krishna as his second, Dhananjaya burnt down Khandava. Hearing about that should be sufficient to restrain your soul and those of your relatives. The great-souled, illustrious and great

Indra, the lord of the thirty gods, bestowed a spear on you. In battle, you will see it shattered and reduced to ashes, struck down by Keshava's chakra. There is a radiant arrow with the mouth of a serpent.[145] You have always honoured and protected it with the best of garlands. It will be struck by the arrows of Pandu's sons. O Karna! Together with you, it will be destroyed. O Karna! Vasudeva, who killed Bana and Bhoumya,[146] himself protects Kiriti. In tumultuous battles, he has killed many enemies who are your equal and superior." Karna said, "There is no doubt that the great-souled lord of the Vrishnis is as you have described him, and even greater. But let me respond to the harsh words that the grandfather has spoken. Let him listen to the consequences. The grandfather will see me in the assembly hall, but not in the war. But until he has obtained peace, I will lay down my weapons and all the kings of the earth will not witness my power."[147] The great archer spoke in this way. He left the assembly hall and went to his own residence. O king! Amidst the Kurus, Bhishma laughed and told Duryodhana, "This son of a suta is sworn to the truth. How will he now discharge his burden? He will witness battle formations and counter battle formations and heads shattered, as there is a destruction of the world by Bhimasena. 'While Avanti, Kalinga, Jayadratha, Bahlika and Vedidhvaja are stationed, I will kill thousands and tens of thousands of enemy soldiers.'[148] When he obtained weapons from the unblemished and illustrious Rama through deceit, proclaiming himself to be a brahmana, Vaikartana, the worst of men, destroyed his dharma and his austerities." When Bhishma, Indra among kings, had spoken, and Karna had departed after laying down his weapons, Duryodhana, Vichitravirya's foolish descendant, spoke to Shantanu's son.'

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'Duryodhana said, "All the Parthas have been born like other men. Why do you think that they alone can be victorious? All of us have been born in the same way. All of us are from human wombs. O grandfather! How do you know that the Parthas will be victorious? For victory, I do not depend on you, or Drona, Kripa and Bahlika, or the other Indras among men. I, Vaikartana Karna and my brother Duhshasana will kill the five Pandavas in battle with sharp arrows. O king! I will then perform a great sacrifice and offer a large quantity of stipends. I will satisfy the brahmanas with cattle, horses and riches."

'Vidura replied, "O son![149] We have heard the aged ones tell us the story of a fowler who spread his net out on the ground to catch birds. Two equally strong birds were captured in that net. But they grasped the net and took to the sky. When the fowler saw them rise up into the sky, he did not lose his senses, but dashed after them. There was a sage in a hermitage, and he had finished his ablutions, when he saw the fowler running after the birds that he was trying to catch. They were in the sky and he was swiftly following them on the ground. O Kouravya! The sage then addressed him with this

shloka. 'O hunter! It seems to me extraordinary that with your feet on the ground, you are chasing those in the sky.' The fowler replied, 'Together, these two are carrying my net away. But once they begin to quarrel, they will come under my control.' Doomed to die, the birds began to quarrel. When they quarrelled, the stupid ones fell down on the ground. Ensnared by the noose of death, they began to fight ferociously with each other. Undetected, the fowler approached them and caught them. In a similar way, relatives who fight over possessions are overcome by their enemies, like those birds. Relatives should eat together, converse together, ask about each other and assemble together. They should never quarrel. As long as they serve their elders with excellent intentions, they are as invisible as a forest protected by lions. O bull among the Bharata lineage! But those who have obtained extensive prosperity, but continue to remain mean, hand over their riches to those who hate them. O son of Dhritarashtra! O bull among the Bharata lineage! Relatives are like kindling that smoke when separated. But when they are together, they blaze away. I will tell you about something that I once saw on a mountain. O Kouravya! When you have heard this, do what you think is best. Together with kiratas and brahmanas, the equals of the gods, who were learned in incantations and medicines, we once travelled to the northern mountains. We went to Mount Gandhamadana, which is like a grove. It was lit up with a large quantity of herbs and was frequented by siddhas and gandharvas. All of us saw some yellow honey there, but it didn't come from bees. It was placed in an uneven mountainous crevice and was as large as the amount a pot can hold. This was Kubera's favourite drink and was guarded by virulent serpents. On drinking it, a mortal man becomes immortal. One without sight gets his eyesight back. One who is aged becomes young. This is what those brahmanas, conversant with herbs, told us. O lord of the earth! When the kiratas saw it, they wished to grasp it. They were destroyed in that mountainous cavern that was full of snakes. In that way, this son of yours wishes for the earth alone.[150] Because of his delusion, he sees the honey, but does not see the downfall. Duryodhana wishes to fight with Savyasachi in battle. But I do not see that he possesses the requisite energy and valour. On a single chariot, he[151] conquered the entire earth. Patiently, that brave one is looking towards you and is waiting. Drupada, king of the Matsyas, and an enraged Dhananjaya will be like fires fanned by the wind and will leave no remnants in battle. O Dhritarashtra! Take King Yudhishthira on your lap. When two sides fight in battle, there is no clear victory for either side."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "O Duryodhana! O son! Think about what I am telling you. Like one who does not know the route, you think that the wrong path is the right one. You wish to envelope the energy of the five great-souled sons of Pandu. But it is as great as the five elements. Kounteya Yudhishthira is established in supreme dharma. Without

attaining the supreme objective,[152] you cannot know him. Kounteya Bhimasena has no one equal to him in strength. He is a killer in battle. But you are challenging him, like a tree against a great storm. Which intelligent one wishes to fight against the warrior who is the wielder of Gandiva? He is supreme among those who know all the weapons, like Meru is among mountains. Whom can Panchala Dhrishtadyumna not vanquish? He releases arrows in the midst of the enemy, like the king of the gods with the vajra. Satyaki is also invincible and is revered by the Andhakas and Vrishnis. He is always engaged in the welfare of the Pandavas and will destroy your soldiers. Then again, which intelligent person will fight with Krishna Pundarikaksha,[153] who is superior to the three worlds? His wives, relatives, kin, his own self and the earth are on one side and Dhananjaya alone on the other. The invincible Vasudeva, in control of his soul, is where the Pandava is. His[154] forces, impossible for the earth to withstand, are where Keshava is. O son! Abide by the words your virtuous well-wishers have spoken for your welfare. Listen to the aged grandfather Bhishma, Shantanu's son. Listen to what I have said for the welfare of the Kurus. Drona, Kripa, Vikarna and the great king Bahlika think the same way that I do. You should listen to them. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! All of them are learned in dharma and are equally affectionate towards you. Your forces, together with those of your brothers, were scattered in Virata's city. Before your eyes, they had to relinquish the cattle in a great fight. We have heard the extraordinary account told about that city, where one was enough for many. That is sufficient proof. This is what Arjuna alone accomplished. What will all of them do together? Know them to be your brothers and give them a means of sustenance."'

727(64)

Vaishampayana said, 'The immensely wise Dhritarashtra spoke to Suyodhana in this way. He again asked the immensely fortunate Sanjaya. "O Sanjaya! Tell me what else Arjuna said after Vasudeva had spoken. I am extremely curious."

'Sanjaya replied, "After hearing Vasudeva's words, in Vasudeva's hearing, the invincible Dhananjaya, Kunti's son, spoke these words at that time. 'O Sanjaya! Go to the grandfather who is Shantanu's son, Dhritarashtra, Drona, Karna, the great king Bahlika, Drona's son, Somadatta, Shakuni Soubala, Duhshasana, Shala, Purumitra, Vivimshati, Vikarna, Chitrasena, the king Jayatsena, Vinda, Anuvinda, the two from Avanti, the Kourava Durmukha, the invincible Saindhava,[155] Bhurishrava, King Bhagadatta, King Jalasandha and all the other kings who have assembled to fight for the cause of the Kouravas. O suta! Having gathered for the sake of Dhritarashtra's son, they are destined to die in the blazing fire of the Pandavas. As is proper, honour them and ask about their welfare. When they have assembled, tell them my words. O Sanjaya! Tell this in the midst of that assembly of kings to Suyodhana, foremost among wicked ones. "The prince is intolerant and evil-minded. Dhritarashtra's son is avaricious and

wicked in his soul." O Sanjaya! Tell him my complete words, while he listens with his advisers.' Having thus started, the wise Partha Dhananjaya, with long and red eyes, looked towards Vasudeva and told me these words that were full of dharma and artha. 'You have listened attentively to the words spoken by the great-souled chief of the Madhus. Those words are mine too and convey them to all the assembled kings. Let all the assembled ones endeavour so that there isn't a great sacrifice of battle, with arrows as the smoke of fire, chariots as chants and the ladle of the bow pouring oblations on your soldiers. Since you did not return to Yudhishthira, the destroyer of enemies, what he desires as his share, I will use my sharp arrows to send you, with your horses, infantry and elephants, to the pure region of the ancestors.'[156] Then I quickly took my leave of Dhananjaya and the four-armed Hari.[157] I returned with the radiance of the immortals, to report those great words to you."'

728(65)

Vaishampayana said, 'When Dhritarashtra's son, Duryodhana, refused to accept those words, all those lords among men stood up and were silent. O great king! After all the kings of the earth had arisen, the king questioned Sanjaya in private. He was under the control of his sons and wished for their victory. He tried to arrive at a conclusion about himself, the others and the Pandavas. Dhritarashtra said, "O son of Gavalgana! Tell me about the strength and the weakness of our own army. You know everything about the Pandavas. How are they superior? In which way are they inferior? You know everything about the strengths of both sides. You are skilled about the decisions that bring dharma and artha. O Sanjaya! I am asking you. Tell me everything. Which of the two sides will cease to exist in the battle?" Sanjaya replied, "I will tell you, as long as it is not in secret. O king! Otherwise, you will hold that against me. O Ajamidha! Bring your father,[158] who is great in his vows, and Queen Gandhari. O Indra among men! They are knowledgeable about dharma and skilled in their determination. They will dispel any hatred you might feel. It is only in their presence that I will tell you everything about Vasudeva and Arjuna's thoughts." Having got to know[159] about the intentions of Sanjaya and his son, the immensely wise Krishna Dvaipayana arrived there and said, "O Sanjaya! Tell Dhritarashtra what he has asked. Answer his question completely. In this connection, tell him everything exactly as you know it, about Vasudeva and Arjuna."'

729(66)

'Sanjaya said, "Arjuna and Vasudeva are supremely honoured archers. They have everything in them and have been born in this way because of their own wishes. O lord! The intelligent Vasudeva's chakra is hidden in the firmament and works through the powers of maya. It may be hidden from the Pandavas, but the Pandavas honour it. I am briefly telling you about their strengths and weaknesses. Listen. As if in play, the

immensely strong Janardana Madhava defeated Naraka, Shambara, Kamsa and the king of Chedi, who was terrible in form. Purushottama[160] pervades the earth, the sky and heaven. He is supreme in his soul and everything is under his control. O king! You have repeatedly asked me about the Pandavas, wishing to know about the strengths and weaknesses of their forces. If you place the entire universe on one side and Janardana on the other, Janardana will exceed the essence of the entire universe. Through his mind, Janardana can reduce the entire universe to ashes. But nothing in the universe can reduce Janardana to ashes. Wherever there is truth, wherever there is dharma, wherever there is modesty, wherever there is uprightness, Govinda is present there. Wherever there is Krishna, victory exists there. As if in play, Purushottama Janardana, the soul of all beings, guides the earth, the sky and heaven. Using the Pandavas as his instruments and keeping the world in delusion, he wishes to burn down your stupid sons, who are devoted to adharma. Through his own yoga, the illustrious Keshava makes the wheel of time, the wheel of the universe and the wheel of the yugas ceaselessly go round and round. I tell you truthfully that the illustrious lord alone governs time and death, the mobile and the immobile. Hari, the great yogi, is the lord of everything in the universe. But he yet undertakes tasks, like any ordinary tiller of the soil. Thus, Keshava deceives the world with the maya of his yoga. But men who seek refuge with him are not deluded."'

730(67)

'Dhritarashtra said, "O Sanjaya! How is it that you know Madhava as the great lord of all the worlds? Why do I not know that? Tell me this."

'Sanjaya replied, "O king! You do not possess the knowledge. But my knowledge is not lacking. Devoid of knowledge and overcome by darkness, you do not know Keshava. O father![161] Through this knowledge, I know Madhusudana of the three yugas[162] as the god who is the creator and the end of all beings, though he has himself not been created."

'Dhritarashtra asked, "O son of Gavalgana! What is the extent of the faith that you always have in Janardana, as a result of which you know the Madusudana of the three yugas?"

'Sanjaya replied, "O fortunate one! I do not fall prey to maya. I do not pretend to act in accordance with dharma. I become pure in sentiments through my faith. I know Janardana from the sacred texts."

'Dhritarashtra said, "O Duryodhana! Resort to Hrishikesha Janardana. O son! We have trust in Sanjaya. Seek refuge with Keshava."

'Duryodhana replied, "If Keshava, Devaki's illustrious son, wishes to destroy the worlds, because of his avowed friendship with Arjuna, I will not seek refuge with him, not even now."

‘Dhritarashtra said, “O Gandhari! This son of yours is extremely evil in his mind. He is envious, wicked in soul and insolently ignores the words of his superiors. He is proceeding towards his downfall.”

‘Gandhari said, “O one who is evil in soul![163] You desire for prosperity. You do not listen to the instructions of the seniors. You will lose your prosperity and your life. You do not pay heed to your father and me. You increase the delight of your enemies and you also increase my sorrow. When you are killed by Bhimasena, you will remember these words of your father.”

‘Vyasa said, “O king! O Dhritarashtra! Listen to me. You are loved by Krishna. Sanjaya is your messenger and he will yoke you to what will ensure your welfare. He knows the ancient and the new Hrishikesha.[164] Listen to him with great attention. He will free you from this great danger. O Vichitravirya’s son! Men are confounded by the darkness of anger and delight. Bound down by many different kinds of nooses, they are not content with their own riches. Because of desire and ignorance, they repeatedly come under Yama’s control. They are like ones without eyes being led by ones without eyes and are borne by their own deeds. There is only one path followed by learned ones. When one sees it, one overcomes death. Such a great person does not become attached.”

‘Dhritarashtra said, “O Sanjaya! Tell me about the path along which there is no danger, traversing along which, one attains Hrishikesha and obtains supreme peace.”

‘Sanjaya replied, “A man who has not controlled his soul cannot know Janardana, whose soul is controlled. Without controlling the soul and without restraining the senses, the performance of rites is inappropriate. There is no doubt that the unwavering renunciation of the senses, the steady abandonment of desire and the constant avoidance of violence constitute the womb of knowledge. O king! Constantly and steadily restrain your senses. Do not permit your intelligence to deviate. Control and direct it. Learned brahmanas say that the mastering of the senses is the certain path to knowledge. This is knowledge and the path that the learned ones traverse. O king! Keshava cannot be attained by those who have not controlled their senses. One who has controlled himself through yoga, and knows the sacred texts, is one who is favoured.”’

731(68)

‘Dhritarashtra said, “O Sanjaya! I am asking you. Tell me again about Pundarikaksha. O son![165] When I know the meanings of his names and his deeds, I will be able to obtain Purushuttoma.”

‘Sanjaya replied, “I have heard Vasudeva’s auspicious names recited. From that, as far as I can make out, Keshava cannot be measured. Because he clothes all beings, because he is the womb of all the gods, he is known as Vasudeva.[166] He is known as Vishnu because he is virile.[167] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Know that he is known as Madhava because of his silence, his meditation and his yoga.[168] Because he has the

essence of everything within himself, and because he killed Madhu, he is known as Madhusudana.[169] The word *krishi* means the earth, while *na* means bliss. Since Krishna means the combination of these two, he is the eternal Krishna. Pundarika means the supreme region that is eternal, without decay and is everlasting. Because his nature is like that, he is known as Pundarikaksha. He is Janardana because he oppresses dasyus.[170] Because he never lacks in vigour,[171] because his vigour never diminishes, he is known as Satvata because of vigour. Because he is like a bull, he is known as Vrishabhekshana.[172] Since he has not been born from a mother, the one who is the destroyer of armies is known as Aja.[173] He is self-resplendent and because he controls[174] the gods, he is known as Damodara. Because of his delight and happiness and because he is the lord of happiness and prosperity, he is known as Hrishikesha.[175] Because he bears up heaven and earth in his arms, he is known as Mahabahu.[176] Since he never falls downwards,[177] he is known as Adokshaja. He is known as Narayana because he is the path followed by men.[178] He is Purushottama because he fills up[179] and destroys again. He is Sarva[180] because he is the origin and the dissolution of everything that exists and does not exist, and because he is a witness to everything. Krishna is established in truth and truth is established in him. Govinda is the truth that is beyond truth and that is the reason he has the name of Satya.[181] The god is known as Vishnu because of his valour. He is known as Jishnu[182] because of his triumphs. He is Ananta[183] because he is eternal. He is Govinda because he knows about the cattle.[184] He can make the unreal appear as real. Thus, he deludes all beings. Such is he, the illustrious one who is always with hermits. He is always based in dharma. The mighty-armed Achyuta will arrive[185] to prevent violence."'

732(69)

'Dhritarashtra said, "O Sanjaya! I envy those who have eyes, because they can see Vasudeva before them. His supreme and radiant form illuminates the direction and the sub-directions. He will speak words that deserve to be honoured, because they will be for the good of the Bharatas and the Srinjayas. Those unblemished words should be accepted by those who wish to live, though they need not be accepted by those who are doomed. He will come to us, the solitary champion of the Satvatas. He is the bull who guides the Yadavas. He destroys enemies and causes terror among them. He takes away fame from those who hate him. The assembled Kurus will see the great-souled and venerable destroyer of enemies. That best of the Vrishni lineage will speak words of non-violence and thus win over my side. He is the eternal and wise rishi. He is an ocean of words. He is a pot among all ascetics. He will come with the golden-feathered Garuda Arishtanemi.[186] He is the lord of all beings and the refuge of the universe. He is the ancient being with one thousand heads. He has no beginning, no middle and no end. His deeds are infinite. He is the one who places the seed. Though without birth, he is the

creator. He is supreme and higher than the supreme. I seek refuge with him. He is the creator who made the three worlds, the gods, the asuras, the serpents and the rakshasas. He is foremost among wise lords of men. He is Indra's younger brother. I seek refuge with him."'

Section Fifty-Four

Bhagavat-Yana Parva

This section has 2055 shlokas and sixty-eight chapters

Chapter 733(70): 93 shlokas
Chapter 734(71): 37 shlokas
Chapter 735(72): 23 shlokas
Chapter 736(73): 23 shlokas
Chapter 737(74): 18 shlokas
Chapter 738(75): 20 shlokas
Chapter 739(76): 20 shlokas
Chapter 740(77): 21 shlokas
Chapter 741(78): 18 shlokas
Chapter 742(79): 9 shlokas
Chapter 743(80): 49 shlokas
Chapter 744(81): 72 shlokas
Chapter 745(82): 29 shlokas
Chapter 746(83): 18 shlokas
Chapter 747(84): 21 shlokas
Chapter 748(85): 17 shlokas
Chapter 749(86): 23 shlokas
Chapter 750(87): 26 shlokas
Chapter 751(88): 104 shlokas
Chapter 752(89): 41 shlokas
Chapter 753(90): 28 shlokas
Chapter 754(91): 22 shlokas
Chapter 755(92): 53 shlokas
Chapter 756(93): 62 shlokas
Chapter 757(94): 45 shlokas
Chapter 758(95): 21 shlokas
Chapter 759(96): 25 shlokas
Chapter 760(97): 20 shlokas
Chapter 761(98): 19 shlokas
Chapter 762(99): 16 shlokas
Chapter 763(100): 15 shlokas
Chapter 764(101): 23 shlokas
Chapter 765(102): 29 shlokas
Chapter 766(103): 38 shlokas
Chapter 767(104): 26 shlokas
Chapter 768(105): 18 shlokas
Chapter 769(106): 18 shlokas
Chapter 770(107): 21 shlokas
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Chapter 772(109): 26 shlokas
Chapter 773(110): 22 shlokas
Chapter 774(111): 23 shlokas
Chapter 775(112): 20 shlokas

Chapter 776(113): 21 shlokas
Chapter 777(114): 22 shlokas
Chapter 778(115): 18 shlokas
Chapter 779(116): 21 shlokas
Chapter 780(117): 23 shlokas
Chapter 781(118): 22 shlokas
Chapter 782(119): 28 shlokas
Chapter 783(120): 18 shlokas
Chapter 784(121): 22 shlokas
Chapter 785(122): 61 shlokas
Chapter 786(123): 27 shlokas
Chapter 787(124): 18 shlokas
Chapter 788(125): 26 shlokas
Chapter 789(126): 49 shlokas
Chapter 790(127): 53 shlokas
Chapter 791(128): 52 shlokas
Chapter 792(129): 34 shlokas
Chapter 793(130): 31 shlokas
Chapter 794(131): 42 shlokas
Chapter 795(132): 40 shlokas
Chapter 796(133): 37 shlokas
Chapter 797(134): 21 shlokas
Chapter 798(135): 30 shlokas
Chapter 799(136): 26 shlokas
Chapter 800(137): 22 shlokas

Yana *means moving or journey as a verb and conveyance as a noun. The parva is so named because Krishna (Bhagavan) goes as a messenger to the Kurus. There are the stories of Dambhodbhava, Matali's search for a son-in-law, Galava's obstinacy, Yayati and Vidula and her son. However, Krishna fails and war is inevitable.*

733(70)

Vaishampayana said, 'When Sanjaya had returned, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira told Dasharha, the bull among the Satvatas. "O Janardana! The time has arrived for friends. I can see no one other than you who can help to tide over our difficulties. O Madhava! It is only by resorting to you that we can fearlessly obtain our share from the son of Dhritarashtra. He is insolent because of his delusion and his advisers. O destroyer of enemies! Just as you protect the Vrishni's from all hardships, you should also protect the Pandavas. Save us from this great danger." Bhagavan[1] replied, "O mighty-armed one! I am present. Tell me what you wish to say. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I will do everything that you ask for."

'Yudhishthira said, "You have heard what Dhritarashtra and his sons wish to do. O Krishna! What Sanjaya told me, is exactly what Dhritarashtra is thinking. His soul stands revealed. A messenger says what he is told to speak. If he speaks otherwise, he should be killed. He wishes for peace with us without returning our kingdom. He is greedy and wicked in his mind. He treats others worse than his own self. On Dhritarashtra's instructions, we have lived in the forest for twelve years, and yet another autumn in concealment. O lord! We did that under the assumption that

Dhritarashtra would abide by the agreement with us. O Krishna! The brahmanas who are with us know that we have not broken the covenant. The aged King Dhritarashtra cannot see his own dharma. Or even if he sees it, out of affection, he follows the instructions of his evil son. O Janardana! The king follows Suyodhana's counsel. He is greedy and deceitful, because he acts so as to ensure his own welfare. O Janardana! What can be more miserable than my not being able to take care of my mother and friends? O Madhusudana! The Kashis, Chedis, Panchalas and Matysas are on my side and you are our protector. O Govinda! But I only asked for five villages—Kushasthala, Vrikasthala, Masandi, Varanavata and any other village as the fifth and last one. 'O father![2] Give us any five villages or towns, where we can reside together and sustain a living without difficulty.' But the evil-souled Dhritarashtra did not grant even this, thinking that everything belongs to him.[3] What can be more miserable than that? When a man is born and brought up in a noble lineage, but covets the possessions of others, avarice destroys his wisdom. When wisdom is destroyed, so is modesty. When modesty is destroyed, dharma is constrained. When dharma is destroyed, prosperity is destroyed. When prosperity is destroyed, a man is killed. Lack of prosperity is like death to a man. O son![4] Relatives, well-wishers and brahmanas turn away from one who has no riches, like birds fly away from a tree that has no blossoms or fruit. O son! In my view, this is like death. When a man has fallen and his relatives turn away from him, it is like the spirit and breath of life leaving one who is dead. Shambara[5] has said that there is nothing worse for a man than a situation where he cannot see how food can be obtained, today or tomorrow. Riches are said to constitute supreme dharma. Everything is established in prosperity. The rich live in this world. Men who do not possess riches are dead. If one resorts to one's strength and robs a man of his riches, along with him, one destroys his dharma, artha and kama too. Having reached that state, some men prefer death. Others resort to villages, still others resort to forests. Some wander around, seeking to destroy themselves. Some become insane. Others come under the control of their enemies. Still others become slaves, so as to obtain the riches of others. For a man, the destruction of prosperity is a worse calamity than death. Prosperity is the source of dharma and kama. Death is the eternal dharma of the world. It is the end of all beings and there is no one who is an exception. O Krishna! A man who has naturally been poor, does not suffer as much as one who has possessed fortune and prosperity and enjoyed happiness, having subsequently descended to an inferior state. When one faces great hardships because of one's own crimes, one blames Indra and the other gods, but never one's own self. Familiarity with all the sacred texts cannot reduce that suffering. Sometimes, he is angry with his servants. Sometimes, he censures his well-wishers. He is always subject to anger and loses his senses. Having come under the control of confusion, he resorts to cruel deeds. From these evil deeds, mixed births[6] result. Mixed births are the way to hell and are the final outcome of evildoers. O Krishna! If he does

not wake up on time, he goes to hell. Wisdom alone is the awakening. The eye of wisdom can save him. When a man regains his wisdom, he looks towards the sacred texts. When he is established in the sacred texts, he regains dharma and modesty becomes his best limb. A modest man avoids evil and his prosperity increases. When he obtains prosperity, he truly becomes a man. He is always established in dharma and he is calm in his soul. He is always engaged in deeds and does not follow adharma. His intelligence does not turn towards evil. One who is without modesty and without senses, is neither a woman, nor a man. According to dharma, he has no rights and is just like a shudra. A man who is modest satisfies the gods, the ancestors and his own self. He becomes immortal because of this. This is the ultimate objective for those who perform pure deeds.

'"O Madhusudana! You have seen all this directly in me. You have seen how I have spent those nights, deprived of the kingdom. There is no way for us to give up that prosperity. It would be better for us to die, while striving towards that. O Madhava! Our first intention is that we should enjoy that common prosperity, in peace with each other and treating each other equally. The stage that comes beyond that is terrible and will lead to the destruction of deeds, if we are to obtain the kingdom after killing the Kouravas. O Krishna! No enemy deserves to be killed, even if he is not related and even if he is not an arya. On the contrary, they are our relatives and our seniors are their aides. Their death will be evil. How can a war be desirable? That is the evil dharma of kshatriyas. But we have been born as kshatriyas. It happens to be our dharma, even if it is adharma. Any other form of conduct is not recommended for us. A shudra performs servitude. A vaishya lives by selling goods. Killing is the means of livelihood for us, while begging is the conduct for brahmanas. A kshatriya kills another kshatriya. A fish lives on another fish. A dog kills another dog. O Dasharha! Behold how each follows the decreed dharma. O Krishna! Dissension is always present in a fight. Lives are lost in a battle. In spite of strength and adherence to policy, there can be victory or defeat in a battle. Life and death are not determined by a being. O supreme among the Yadu lineage! Until the right time has come, one does not find happiness or unhappiness. One man may kill many. Many may unite to kill a single man. A coward may kill a brave one. An infamous one may kill one who is famous. Victory may go to either side. Either side may confront defeat. This is also true of destruction. If one tries to flee, there will be death and destruction. But in all cases, a war should be avoided. Where is the killer who is not killed in return? O Hrishikesha! For one who has been killed, victory and defeat are equal. I do not think that defeat is different from death. O Krishna! It is certain that one who is victorious also suffers from a loss. At the end, a beloved one will be killed by someone from the other side. O Krishna! When he is rendered weak because he can no longer see his sons or brothers, he will be completely overwhelmed by a disdain for life. Those who are modest, brave, aryas and compassionate are killed in

battle. But an inferior one may escape. O Janardana! Even after killing others, we are overcome by remorse. There is evil, even for those who survive. The survivors gather their strength so as to destroy those who remain. In a desire to end the enmity, they seek complete annihilation. But victory engenders enmity, because those who are defeated are unhappy. A man who can cast aside victory and defeat is both happy and peaceful. But a man who has created enmity always sleeps in misery. He doesn't have ease of mind, like living in a house full of snakes. He who annihilates everybody is bereft of fame and always obtain ill fame among all beings. Enmity is not pacified and is sustained for a long period of time. There are those who remain to recount it to men who are born in the lineage. O Keshava! Enmity is never settled through another enmity. O Krishna! It becomes stronger, like fire fed with oblations. There is no exception to this and peace will always remain unattainable. This is the continual taint in those who seek to establish their own superiority. Manliness is a strong weakness in the heart. One can find peace only by completely casting it aside from one's mind. O Madhusudana! By uprooting the enemy by the roots, we may be able to accomplish our objective. But that will be crueller still. We can gain peace by giving up our claim, but that will be like death. There is no doubt that this leaves the prospect of destruction, for our enemies and our own side.[7] We do not wish to give that up. Nor do we desire a destruction of the lineage. Peace through submission is desirable. There are those who are striving in a desire to avoid the war. If those attempts at pacification fail, a war is unavoidable and is not a sign of weakness. When attempts at pacification fail, the results are terrible. Learned ones have seen these signs in a quarrel between dogs. There is a wagging of tails first. Then there is a bark. Then there is a bark in return. After that, there is a retreat and the display of teeth. Then there is loud barking and the quarrel. O Krishna! The stronger one wins and eats the other one's flesh. That is the case with men too and there is no difference. The stronger always acts in the same way with the weak. There is disregard and aggression and the weak one surrenders to the strong. It is always appropriate that a father, a king and an aged one should be revered. O Janardana! That is the reason Dhritarashtra is worthy of our honour and worship. O Madhava! But Dhritarashtra's affection towards his son is strong. As long as he is under his son's control, he will laugh at our submission. O Krishna! Now that the time has come, what do you think should be done next? O Madhava! How can we avoid the diminishing of artha and dharma? O Madhusudana! O supreme among men! In this difficult situation, you are the most appropriate person for us to consult. You are our friend. You wish us well. You know the consequences of all deeds. O Krishna! You are our well-wisher and you know the answer to everything."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Thus addressed, Janardana replied to Dharmaraja. "For the welfare of both the sides, I will myself go to the assembly of the Kurus. O king! If I succeed in obtaining peace without giving up your interests, I will obtain great merits

and the deed will have great consequences. I will free the masses of Kurus and Srinjayas from the noose of death. I will also free the Pandavas, the sons of Dhritarashtra and the entire earth." Yudhishthira said, "O Krishna! It is not my view that you should go to the Kurus. However well you articulate your words, Suyodhana will not listen to them. All the assembled kshatriya kings follow Suyodhana. O Krishna! It does not appeal to me that you should arrive in their midst. O Madhava! If hatred is exhibited towards you, we will not obtain any pleasure from gaining objects, or happiness from attaining divinity, or the prosperity of all the immortals." Bhagavan replied, "O great king! I know the wicked nature of Dhritarashtra's son. But through this, we will not be blamed by all the kings of the world. All the kings of the earth combined are not enough to withstand me, if I am enraged in battle, like inferior animals before a lion. If they act against me in any way, I will burn up all the Kurus. That is my intention. O Partha! My going there will not be fruitless. There will be some gain in going there, since we will not be blamed by the others." Yudhishthira said, "O Krishna! If it pleases you, then go in peace to the Kouravas. Perhaps there will be some gain from it. I will see you again when you return. O lord! O Vishvaksena![8] Go to the Kurus and bring peace among the Bharatas. Let us all live in peace, with happy minds and happy hearts. You are a brother. You are a friend. You are dear to Bibhatsu and to me. We have no doubt that you wish us well. Go safely for our welfare. You know us and you know the others. You know artha. You know how to speak. O Krishna! Tell Suyodhana what will be good for us. O Keshava! You can tell them whatever is in conformity with dharma, whether it is for peace, or whether it is for enmity."'

734(71)

'Bhagavan said, "I have listened to Sanjaya's words and I have also heard your words. I know everything about their intentions and I also know what you have in mind. Your intelligence is based on dharma. Their minds are turned towards enmity. You will cherish everything that can be gained without resorting to a war. O lord of the earth! But following rituals is not the task of a kshatriya. In all the stages of life, it has been said that a kshatriya should not resort to begging for a livelihood. Victory or death on the field of battle has been eternally ordained by the creator. This is the natural dharma of kshatriyas and weakness in that is not praised. O Yudhishthira! It is not possible to have a livelihood by resorting to weakness. O mighty-armed one! Display your valour. O scorcher of enemies! Conquer the foes. O scorcher of enemies! The sons of Dhritarashtra are extremely avaricious. They have obtained affection, they have obtained friends and they have obtained strength by living with them[9] for a long time. O lord of the earth! Therefore, peace with the Kurus is not desirable. Because of Bhisma, Drona, Kripa and the others, they think themselves to be stronger. O king! As long as you act mildly towards them, they will take your kingdom away. O destroyer of enemies!

Dhritarashtra's son will not do what you wish, because of kindness, because of compassion, or because of dharma and artha. O destroyer of enemies! O Pandava! This alone is proof, that they left you in a loincloth, and did not repent their evil deed. In the sight of the grandfather, Drona, the intelligent Vidura and the foremost among the Kurus, who knew exactly what had happened, that wicked one did not repent his cruel deeds. You are generous, mild, self-controlled and follow dharma. O king! But he used deceit to defeat you in a game of dice. O king! When one's conduct is of this nature, do not resort to affection. They deserve to be killed by all the worlds. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Why not by you? Insolent and delighted, he eloquently maligned you and your brothers and told his brothers, 'The Pandavas have nothing that they can call their own now. Their names and their lineages will not survive either. After a long period of time has passed, they will confront defeat. Their subjects will no longer honour them. Their natural subjects have also been destroyed.' He uttered such harsh words and many others. He boasted among his relatives, when you were banished to the forest. Those who were assembled there, saw that you were without blame. They were seated in the assembly hall, their throats choked with tears and they wept. The kings and the brahmanas did not praise him then. All the courtiers censured Duryodhana. O destroyer of enemies! For someone born in a noble lineage, there can be censure and there can be death. O king! But death is several times superior to a reviled and wicked life. O king! He has been dead since the instant he was censured for his shamelessness before all the kings of the earth. O great king! One whose conduct is of this nature can be killed effortlessly, like a tree whose roots have been severed, so that it is precariously balanced on its trunk. The evil-minded one is ignoble to all the worlds and should be killed, like a snake. O destroyer of enemies! O king! Therefore, kill him and do not hesitate.

'"O unblemished one! But it pleases me, and is also worthy of you, that you should bow in obeisance and show your respects to your father[10] and Bhishma. O king! I will myself go and resolve the doubts of all those who are in two minds about Duryodhana. In the midst of the kings, I will expound your manly qualities and his transgressions of these. On hearing my words, in conformity with dharma and artha, the lords of the earth and the kings from the various countries will recognize you to possess dharma in your soul, and one who speaks the truth. They will know that he acts out of avarice. When the four varnas are assembled, among the old and the young, among inhabitants of the town and the country, I will censure him. When you are striving for peace, no adharma will be attached to you. The kings will blame the Kurus and Dhritarashtra. When he is forsaken by all the worlds, what will be left to be done? O king! With Duryodhana slain, there remains nothing else to be done. With this intention, I will go the Kurus. I will not relinquish your objective. I will strive for peace and notice their intentions. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Having observed the conduct and

preparations of the Kouravas for war, I will leave and return to ensure your victory. In every way, I expect a war with the enemies. It seems to me that all the portents indicate that. The beasts and the birds are making terrible sounds. When it is night, the foremost of elephants and horses are assuming terrible forms. Signifying evil, the fire is assuming many colourful and terrible forms. Had death not arrived to destroy the world of men, this would not have been the case. Ready the weapons, arrows, armour, chariots, elephants and standards. Let all the warriors be trained. Let them ready the horses, elephants and chariots. O Indra among men! Let everything be ready for battle. Let everything be kept ready. O king! O foremost among the Pandavas! As long as he lives, Duryodhana is incapable of returning the prosperous kingdom that was once yours, and which he robbed in the gambling with the dice."'

735(72)

'Bhimasena said, "O Madhusudana! You should speak in such a way that the Kurus resort to peace. Do not frighten them with war. He is intolerant and is always angry. That extremely spirited one hates prosperity in others. One should not address strong words towards Duryodhana. One should act peacefully towards him. His disposition is naturally wicked. His mind is equal to that of a dasyu. He is intoxicated with prosperity and bears enmity towards the Pandavas. He does not have far-sightedness and is cruel. He is deceitful and wicked in his valour. His anger lasts for a long time and the evil-souled one is fond of deceit. Even if he dies, he will not surrender, or give up what he thinks belongs to him. O Krishna! I think that peace with someone like that is extremely difficult. He does not listen to the words of his well-wishers. He has discarded dharma. He loves falsehood. He goes against the words and intentions of his well-wishers. Overcome by anger, his nature is based on wickedness. His natural wickedness is like that of a snake provoked with a straw. You know everything about Duryodhana's soldiers, their conduct, their nature, their strength and their valour. In earlier times, the Kurus, together with their sons, were content and so were we. We rejoiced with our relatives, like Indra's seniors. O Madhusudana! But because of Duryodhana's anger, the Bharatas will burn, like a forest burns with fire at the end of winter.

'"O Madhusudana! Eighteen kings are famous as those who annihilated their kin, their well-wishes and their relatives. At the end of the period of dharma,[11] Bali was born among the asuras. He was prosperous and blazed in his energy. Udavarta was born among the Haihayas, Janamejaya among the Nipas, Bahula among the Talajanghas, the insolent Vasu among the Krimis, Ajabindu among the Suviras, Kusharddhika among the Surashtras, Arkaja among the Balihas, Dhoutamulaka among the Chinas, Hayagriva among the Videhas, Varapra among the Mahoujasas, Bahu among the Sundaravegas, Pururava among the Diptakshas, Sahaja among the Chedi-Matysas, Brihadbala among the Prachetas, Dharana among the Indra-Vatsas, Vigahana among the Mukutas and

Shama among the Nandivegas. They defiled their lineages. O Krishna! They were the worst of men and were born at the end of the yuga. At the end of a yuga,[12] driven by destiny, Duryodhana has now been born in the lineage of the Kurus. He is the worst of his lineage. He is a wicked and evil man. Therefore, speak softly to him, in conformity with dharma and artha. Act generally in accordance with his desires and do not exhibit terrible valour before him. O Krishna! We would rather follow Duryodhana and be under his control, than let the lineage of the Bharatas be destroyed. O Vasudeva! Act so that he and the other Kurus become indifferent towards us. Otherwise, the Kurus will be destroyed. O Krishna! Speak to the aged grandfather and the courtiers, so that there is fraternity among the brothers and Dhritarashtra's son is pacified. This is why I say and the king[13] approves. Arjuna has never been in favour of war, because there is great compassion in Arjuna."'

736(73)

Vaishampayana said, 'When the mighty-armed Keshava heard these words of Bhima, which were without precedence in terms of their mildness, he laughed. The mountains seemed to have become light. The fire seemed to have become cold. That is what Rama's younger brother, Shouri, the wielder of the Sharnga bow, thought.[14] Vrikodara Bhimasena was seated, overcome with compassion. To incite him, like a wind fanning the fire, he said, "O Bhimasena! On other occasions, you have advocated war. You have desired to suppress the cruel sons of Dhritarashtra, who find delight in murders. O scorcher of enemies! You do not sleep. You lie down and remain awake, with your face downwards. You have always spoken terrible, violent and harsh words. When you sigh, your breath burns like the fire. O Bhima! Your mind is not at peace, like a fire with smoke. You lie down alone and groan, like a weak person unable to bear a load. People who do not know the reason think that you are mad. O Bhima! You are like a roaming elephant, which uproots trees, groans and stamps down on the ground with its feet. You find no pleasure in the company of people. O Pandava! You stay away from them. Whether it is night or day, you do not welcome anyone. You suddenly smile, or weep because of a mysterious reason. You are sometimes seated, resting your head on your thighs. Or you are seen, sometimes frowning, or licking your lips. O Bhima! All this is because you are angry. 'As certainly as the sun rises in the east with its light, as certainly as it sets in the west, circling the pole star with its rays, thus do I swear and there will be no deviation from my vow. I will attack the intolerant Duryodhana and kill him with a club.' This is what you swore on your club earlier, in the midst of your brothers. O scorcher of enemies! Is it the same mind that now turns towards pacification? Now that the time for war has arrived, those who wished war are turning away. O Bhima! Are you frightened? O Partha! Or is it that you have seen portents, when you are asleep or when you are awake, and those make you turn towards peace?

You do not show any manliness in you. You are like a eunuch. You have been overcome by cowardice. That is the reason your mind has swerved. Your heart trembles and your mind is full of despair. Your thighs are paralysed. That is the reason you want peace. O Partha! The minds of mortal men are inconstant and fickle, like the kernel of a shalmali tree that is swayed by the wind. This distorted intelligence is as rare in you as human speech is in cows. The minds of the sons of Pandu will be immersed, like a boat in water. That Bhimasena should speak words like these, is as extraordinary to me as mountains moving around. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Look back at your own deeds and the lineage into which you have been born. Arise! Do not yield to despair. O brave one! Be steady. O scorcher of enemies! This lassitude is not like you. A kshatriya does not obtain that which he does not seize through his energy."'

737(74)

Vaishampayana said, 'When Vasudeva spoke to him in this way, the one who was always angry and intolerant, controlled himself like a well-trained horse and instantly replied, "O Achyuta! You have not completely understood what I wish to do. Truth is my valour and I am delighted at the prospect of war. O Dasharha! Because you have lived with me for a long time, you know my spirit. Or is it that you do not know me at all, like one swimming in a lake without a boat? Is that the reason you are censuring me with words that are off the mark? O Madhava! How can someone who knows me, Bhimasena, speak in the perverse way that you have chosen to do? O descendant of the Vrishni lineage! Therefore, let me tell you a few words about my own manliness and my strength. These are not equalled by anyone else. It is always the case that an arya should not praise himself. But because you have excessively reviled me, I will tell you about my own strength. O Krishna! Behold. This is earth and that is heaven, from which, all beings and all immobile objects have originated. It is the mother of everything. If these two[15] suddenly collide in anger, like mountains, I will hold them apart with my arms, with all their mobile and immobile objects. Behold the space between my two arms. They are like giant clubs. I do not see a man who can escape after having been grasped by them. The Himalaya mountains, the oceans and the wielder of the vajra and the killer of Bala himself—even if all three try together, they cannot free one whom I have grasped with my strength. I call kill all the kshatriyas who have assembled for the war, wishing to kill the Pandavas. I can fling them down on the ground and trample them with my feet. O Achutya! You are not unfamiliar with my valour and the way in which I defeated all the kings and brought them under my control. O Janardana! If it is the case that you do not know me, with radiance like that of the rising sun, you will find out when you see me in the fierce turmoil of battle. O unblemished one! Why have you pierced me with harsh words, like pricking a boil with a needle? I have told you what I think I am. But know that I am greater than that. You will see me when the turmoil of

battle begins. You will see elephants, charioteers and riders destroyed by me. You and the worlds will see me angrily kill men and bulls among the kshatriyas, destroying the supreme among the best. My marrow has not wasted away and my mind is not trembling. Even if all the worlds are enraged, I have no fear. O Madhusudana! It is only because of goodness of heart that I have shown compassion and have patiently endured all the hardships, so that the Bharatas are not annihilated because of us."'

738(75)

'Bhagavan said, "To determine your intentions, I spoke to you out of affection, not to belittle you, or to display my learning, or out of anger, or because I doubted you. I know your greatness of spirit. I know the strength you possess. I know your deeds and I am not trying to find fault with you. O Pandava! The qualities I see in you are a thousand times more than those you see yourself. You have been born in a lineage that is worshipped by all the kings. You are surrounded by relatives and well-wishers. O Bhima! That is the kind of person you are. O Vrikodara! There are those who question dharma and seeking to draw a distinction between destiny and human endeavour, fail to arrive at a conclusion. The same reasons that lead a man to succeed also bring about his failure. The consequences of human action are always uncertain. Even wise ones, competent to judge matters, may decide in one way, though the consequences are the opposite. This is like the changing direction of the wind in the sky. The deeds performed by a man may be well thought out, well advised and conducted well. But destiny may act in a contrary way. Then again, human endeavour can counter what destiny has done, or not done. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This is like cold and heat, hunger and thirst.[16] And yet again, a man may undertake deeds that are thought out well and these are not countered by destiny. These are the signs of destiny and human endeavour.[17] O Pandava! The world cannot sustain itself through anything other than action. A man who knows this will act, regardless of the fruits, determined by both endeavour and destiny. He who possesses this intelligence will engage in his own deeds. He will not suffer from failure, or exult at success. O Bhimasena! This is all that I meant to say. We cannot be certain of complete success in a battle with the Kurus. Since destiny constantly changes, one should not let go of the reins. Nor should one fall prey to despair and exhaustion. That is all that I meant to say.

'"O Pandava! I will go to Dhritarashtra tomorrow morning. I will try to bring about peace without sacrificing your interests. If I succeed in obtaining peace, I will attain infinite fame. Your desires will be satisfied and their supreme welfare will be ensured. But if the Kurus stick to their resolution and do not listen to my words, there will be war and terrible deeds will ensue. O Bhimasena! In that war the burden will be on you. Arjuna will have the responsibility of guiding the chariot and the others will be dragged along. I will be Bibhatsu's charioteer in that war. That is what Arjuna desires, because I

do not myself wish to fight. O Vrikodara! It was because I had some doubt about your intentions that I provoked you and addressed you as an eunuch. It was to ignite your energy."'

739(76)

'Arjuna said, "O Janardana! Yudhishthira has said everything that there is to be said. O scorcher of enemies! O lord! But listening to your words, it seems to me that you think that peace will not be obtained easily. That may be because of the avarice of Dhritarashtra's son, or because of our weakness. You also think that human valour may be fruitless and that human endeavour may not bear fruit, even when it is accompanied with deeds. What you have said may be true, or it may not be true. But there is nothing that should be looked upon as impossible. You think that our hardships have not been good for our cause. But they have performed deeds and have no fruits to show for it. O lord! When performed correctly, deeds do bear fruit. O Krishna! Therefore, act so that we may find refuge with the others. You are the foremost well-wisher of the Pandavas and the Kurus, just as the brave Prajapati is of the gods and the asuras. Do what is healthy for the Kurus and the Pandavas. I think that it will not be difficult for you to accomplish what is good for us. O Janardana! If that is the case, your task will be carried out. There is no doubt that you will accomplish this merely through the act of going there. O brave one! Deal with that evil-souled one as you deem appropriate. Do everything depending on what you think is proper. O Krishna! Whether you want us to seek refuge with them, or whatever else it is that you desire, the matter will have weight. Does that evil-souled one not deserve death, together with his relatives? O Madhusudana! He could not tolerate the prosperity he saw with Dharma's son.[18] Unable to find a way that was in conformity with dharma, he violently stole it, with the aid of one who was deceitful with dice. How can a man who is an archer and a kshatriya refuse when he is challenged, even if it means the loss of his life? O Varshneya! When I saw us vanquished through adharma and exiled to the forest, Suyodhana became mine to kill. O Krishna! It is not strange that you should wish to do something for your friends. But how will the chief task be implemented, through mildness or enmity? If you think that their immediate slaughter is better, let it be instantly done, without any more reflection. You know how Droupadi was molested by the evil-minded one in the midst of the assembly hall and that the others tolerated it. O Madhava! I do not think that such a person will treat the Pandavas fairly. Good counsel to him will be like seed sown on barren land. Therefore, do what you think is best for the welfare of the Pandavas. O Varshneya! Let us act swiftly on whatever needs to be done next."'

740(77)

'Bhagavan said, "O mighty-armed one! O Pandava! It will be as you say. O Bibhatsu!

Everything depends on two courses of action.[19] A field may be cleared and made fertile by a farmer. O Kounteya! But if it does not rain in the right season, there will be no fruit. It is said that man may make efforts, such as through irrigation. But even there, it is certain that there can be a drought because of destiny. Our great-souled ancestors have decided this in their wisdom—the affairs of the world depend on both human effort and destiny. I will exert myself to the best of human endeavour. But there is nothing that I can do to counteract destiny. The evil-minded one acts after discarding both dharma and truth. And he does not repent that kind of conduct. His wicked intentions are encouraged by his advisers—Shakuni, the son of the suta and his brother Duhshasana. He will not give up the kingdom for the sake of obtaining peace. O Partha! Not unless Suyodhana and his relatives are killed. Even if Dharmaraja gives everything up and surrenders to him, the evil-minded one will not hand over the kingdom he is asking for. I do not think there is any point in telling him what Yudhishthira wants. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Dharmaraja has himself stated the reasons. The Kourava will do everything that is wicked. Because he will act in this way, he deserves to be killed by anyone in this world. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He deserves to be killed by me, or anyone in this world. He maltreated all of you when you were children. The cruel and evil-minded one wrested your kingdom. The wicked one had no peace, once he saw Yudhishthira's prosperity. O Partha! He has repeatedly tried to create dissension between you and me, but I have never accepted his evil intentions. O mighty-armed one! You also know his supreme desire and that I always seek to ensure Dharmaraja's welfare. O Arjuna! Knowing his intentions and my supreme desires, why are you suddenly suspicious, as if you do not know? O Partha! You also know the supreme destiny that has been ordained. How can you then think that one should surrender to the enemy? O Pandava! O Partha! Through word and deed, I will do whatever it is possible for me to do. But I do not expect peace with the enemy. Is this not the supremely beneficial peace that Bhishma desired, when the cattle were robbed? A year has passed, but has it been accomplished?[20] Once you had decided, they were defeated then. Suyodhana will not be satisfied with parting with the smallest bit for the shortest period of time. I will always act in accordance with Dharmaraja's instructions. But the wicked deeds of that evil-souled one will also have to be considered."'

741(78)

'Nakula said, "O Madhava! Dharmaraja knows about dharma and is also generous. He has spoken many words that are in conformity with dharma. O Madhava! Bhimasena knows the king's mind. O Madhava! He has spoken about peace, but also about the strength of his arms. In the same way, you have heard what Phalguna had to say. O brave one! You have also spoken about your own views. O Purushottama! Having heard what everyone has to say, at the appropriate time, you should do what you think to be

the best. O Keshava! Different views are expressed at different times. O scorcher of enemies! But at the right time, a man himself has to decide on the task. Something may be thought of in one way, but actually happens in another way. O Purushottama! Therefore, in this world, the views of men change. When we lived in the forest, we had one kind of view. O Krishna! We had another when we lived in concealment, and yet another when we revealed ourselves. O Varshneya! The love for the kingdom that we have now, did not exist as much when we roamed around in the forest. O brave one! O Janardana! When you heard that our period of exile in the forest was over, these seven akshouhinis have been assembled through your grace. These tigers among men have strength and manliness that is impossible to think of. On seeing them take up arms in battle, which man will not tremble? Therefore, in the midst of the Kurus, you should speak words of pacification. Speak words such that the evil Suyodhana is not hurt and frightened. Yudhishthira, Bhimasena, the unvanquished Bibhatsu, Sahadeva, I, Rama,[21] Keshava, the immensely valorous Satyaki, Virata and his sons, Drupada and his advisers, Parshata Dhrishtadyumna, the brave king of Kashi and Dhrishtaketu of Chedi are here. Which mortal man of flesh and blood will fight them on the field of battle? O mighty-armed one! There is no doubt that you will accomplish the objectives of Dharmaraja merely through the act of going there. O unblemished one! Vidura, Bhishma, Drona and Bahlika are capable of understanding what is good for them, when you explain it to them. They are the ones who will persuade Dhritarashtra, lord of men, and the wicked Suyodhana and his advisers. O Janardana! With you speaking and Vidura listening, what can the two of you not counter and prevent from deviating from the path?"'

742(79)

'Sahadeva said, "What the king has said is eternal dharma. O scorcher of enemies! But you should act in such a way that there is war. O Dasharha! Even if the Kurus wish for peace with the Pandavas, you should provoke them to war. On having seen Panchali molested in the assembly hall, how can my anger towards Suyodhana be pacified without him being killed? O Krishna! If Bhima, Arjuna and Dharmaraja wish to stick to dharma, I will give up dharma and wish to fight them in battle."

'Satyaki said, "O mighty-armed one! The immensely intelligent Sahadeva has spoken the truth. My anger at Duryodhana will only be pacified after he has been killed. When you saw the wretched Pandavas in the forest, clad in bark and deerskin, you know that your anger was ignited. O Purushottama! Therefore, what Madri's brave son, bull among men, has said is the view of all the warriors."'

Vaishampayana said, 'When the immensely intelligent Yuyudhana was speaking these words, a terrible roar, like that from lions, arose from all the warriors who were there. All the brave ones applauded his words in every direction, saying that he was right. In

their desire for war, they gladdened the heart of Shini's descendant.'

743(80)

Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing the king's words, which were in conformity with dharma and artha and ensured welfare, Krishna[22] was afflicted with grief. She spoke to Dasharha, who was seated there. King Drupada's daughter possessed long and black hair. She applauded the words of Sahadeva and maharatha Satyaki. On seeing that even Bhimasena spoke in favour of peace, she was extremely dejected. With tears in her eyes, the spirited one spoke these words.

'"O Madhusudana! O mighty-armed one! You know about dharma. O Janardana! You know how the Pandavas were deprived of their happiness through the deceit of Dhritarashtra's son and his advisers. You know about the advice that the king secretly gave to Sanjaya. O Dasharha! You know what Yudhishthira told Sanjaya. You have heard everything. 'O immensely radiant one![23] O father! O mighty-armed one! Give us five villages—Kushasthala, Vrikasthala, Masandi, Varanavata and whichever other village you decide as the fifth and the last, for us to live in.' O Keshava! Duryodhana and his advisers were to be addressed in these words. O Krishna! O Dasharha! Yudhishthira was modest and desired peace. But though he heard these words, Suyodhana did not comply.[24] O Krishna! If Suyodhana desires peace without returning the kingdom, there is no point in going there to strive for peace. O mighty-armed one! Together with the Srinjayas, the Pandavas are capable of withstanding the terrible and angry forces of Dhritarashtra's son. Our objectives are incapable of being obtained through conciliation and generosity. O Madhusudana! Therefore, you should not show any compassion towards them. O Krishna! If we wish to save our lives, enemies who cannot be pacified through conciliation and generosity should be chastised through the staff. O Achyuta! O mighty-armed one! Therefore, swiftly hurl a mighty staff at them, together with the Pandavas and the Srinjayas. The Parthas are capable of doing this and it will bring you fame. O Krishna! Do what will bring happiness to the kshatriyas. O Dasharha! If a kshatriya follows his own dharma, he should kill a kshatriya who has become avaricious, and even a non-kshatriya. O father![25] The only exception is a brahmana, even if he commits every kind of sin. The brahmana is the preceptor of all the varnas and has precedence in everything. O Janardana! Those who know dharma know that while it is a sin to kill someone who should not be killed, it is also a sin not to kill someone who should be killed. O Krishna! O Dasharha! Act so that this sin does not touch you, together with the Pandavas and the Srinjayas and their soldiers. O Janardana! Because of my faith, I will say what has often been said earlier. O Keshava! Has there been a woman like me on earth? I am the daughter of King Drupada and have arisen from the middle of a sacrificial altar. O Krishna! I am Dhrishtadyumna's sister and your beloved friend. I have become a member of the Ajamidha lineage and am the

daughter-in-law of the great-souled Pandu. I am wife to the five sons of Pandu, who are like five Indras in their radiance. Through these five maharathas, I have given birth to five brave sons. O Krishna! Under dharma, they bear the same relationship towards you that Abhimanyu does. O Keshava! Such a woman was grabbed by the hair and was molested when she went to the assembly hall, while the sons of Pandu looked on and you were still alive. While the Kouravas,[26] the Panchalas and the Vrishnis were alive, I was brought to the middle of the assembly hall and made a servant maid to those evil ones. The Pandus looked at me, without any anger and without making any effort. O Govinda! I thought of you in my mind, wishing that you might save me. The illustrious king, who is my father-in-law, told me, 'O Panchali! It is my view that you deserve to have a boon. Ask for a boon.' I replied, 'Let the Pandavas, with their chariots and their weapons, be freed from servitude.' O Keshava! They were freed at my words, but were sent to dwell in the forest. O Janardana! You are aware of these and other hardships. O lotus-eyed one! Save me, along with my brothers, my kin and my relatives. O Krishna! According to dharma, I am the daughter-in-law of both Bhishma and Dhritarashtra. Yet, I was forcibly made a slave. O Krishna! If Duryodhana remains alive for a single instant, shame on Bhimasena's strength, shame on Partha's skill with the bow. O Krishna! If you wish to show favours towards me, if you are compassionate towards me, you should direct your entire wrath at Dhritarashtra's sons."

'Having said this, the black-eyed one with the beautiful hips used her left hand to gather the side of her hair. It was soft and curled at the tips and was beautiful to see. It was extremely dark and was perfumed with sacred fragrances. It bore all the auspicious marks and shone like a giant snake. The lotus-eyed one approached Pundarikaksha with the gait of an elephant. Her eyes filled with tears, Krishna[27] told Krishna, "O Pundarikaksha! This was grasped by Duhshasana. You should remember this at all times, when you seek to bring about a peace with the enemy. O Krishna! If Bhima and Arjuna are so mean as to desire peace, my aged father will fight, with his maharatha sons. O Madhusudana! With Abhimanyu at the forefront, my five immensely valiant sons will also fight with the Kurus. How can my heart have any peace until I see Duhshasana's dark hand severed and covered with dust? Thirteen years have passed, while I have waited. I have hidden my anger in my heart, like a kindled fire. My heart has been pierced and oppressed by the stake of Bhima's words. The mighty-armed one can only see dharma now." Her throat choked with tears, the long-eyed one spoke in this way. Krishna trembled and wept, her voice choked with tears. Hot tears flowed down from the eyes of the one with the beautiful hips and moistened her large breasts.

'The mighty-armed Keshava comforted her. "O Krishna! You will soon see the women of the Bharata lineage weep. O timid one! O beautiful one! They will weep as you are crying now, because their kin and relatives will be slain, with their friends killed and their soldiers killed. Together with Bhima, Arjuna and the twins, I will act in accordance

with Yudhishthira's instructions and according to what destiny has ordained. Cooked by destiny, if the sons of Dhritarashtra do not listen to my words, they will be killed and will lie down on the ground, food for dogs and jackals. The Himalaya mountains may move. The earth may shatter into a hundred fragments. The sky, with all its nakshatras, may fall down. But my words will not be false. O Krishna! I am telling you this truthfully. Control your tears. With the enemies killed, you will soon see your husbands united with prosperity."'

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'Arjuna said, "You are the supreme well-wisher of all the Kurus. As a relative, you have always been loved by both the sides. O Keshava! You are capable of restoring health to the Pandavas and the sons of Dhritarashtra and bringing about peace and you must act accordingly. O Pundarikaksha! You should go to the intolerant Suyodhana for the sake of peace. O destroyer of enemies! Tell the Bharatas what must be said. If you speak to him words that are in conformity with dharma and artha, auspicious and directed towards health, and the foolish one does not accept them, he will fall prey to destiny."

'Bhagavan said, "I will go to King Dhritarashtra with a desire to accomplish what is in accordance with dharma, and what is good for the health of the Kurus."'

Vaishampayana said, 'When darkness had passed and the clear sun had risen, at the muhurta of *maitra,* when the sun's rays were mild, in the month of Koumuda and the nakshatra of Revati, when autumn was over and winter had arrived, in a season when there is an abundance of crops and happiness, the foremost among spirited ones got ready.[28] He listened to the auspicious and sacred benedictions pronounced by happy and well-trained brahmanas, like Vasava listening to the benedictions of rishis. He performed the morning ablutions and bathed. He purified and ornamented himself. Janardana worshipped the sun and the fire. He touched a bull on its tail and showed his respects to the brahmanas. He circumambulated the fire and looked at all the auspicious objects that were before him. He acknowledged Pandava's words. Satyaki, Shini's grandson, was seated and he addressed him. "Ready the chariot, with the conch shell, the chakra and the club. Also include the quivers, the spears and all kinds of weapons. Duryodhana, Karna and Soubala are evil in their souls. A stronger person should not ignore an enemy, however weak he might be." Knowing Keshava's instructions, his servants rushed to prepare and yoke the chariot of the one who wields the chakra and the club. It was as radiant as the fire of destruction. It could travel in the sky. It was adorned with two wheels that were like the sun and the moon. It was decorated with figures of half-moons, full moons, fish, animals, birds and many different kinds of flowers and was embellished with gems and jewels. It was large and beautiful and was as radiant as the rising sun. It had excellent flags and excellent pennants, decorated with jewels and gold. It was invincible and was full of objects, and was covered with

tiger skins. It diminished the fame of enemies and increased the delight of the Yadu lineage. They yoked it to the horses Sainya, Sugriva, Meghapushpa and Balahaka, all of whom had been bathed and dressed in excellent harnesses. There was a standard with the Indra among birds[29] on it and the chariot uttered an excellent roar, thereby increasing Krishna's glory. Shouri ascended the chariot, like the performers of pure deeds ascend vimanas. It was like a summit of Mount Meru and roared like clouds or battle drums.

'Purushottama made Satyaki ascend the chariot and departed. The earth and the sky resounded with the sound of the chariot. In an instant, everything was clear and the sky was bereft of clouds. Auspicious winds began to blow. The dust settled down. Auspicious birds and animals circled and followed Vasudeva's departure. Cranes, woodpeckers and swans circled and followed Madhusudana, voicing auspicious sounds in every direction. To the chanting of mantras, great oblations were offered into the fire. There was no smoke and flames circled around. Vasishtha, Vamadeva, Bhuridyumna, Gaya, Kratha, Shukra, Narada, Valmika, Maruta, Kushika and Bhrigu, devarshis and brahmarshis, circled Indra's younger brother Krishna, who had brought happiness to the Yadu lineage. Thus honoured by masses of immensely fortunate maharshis, Krishna left for the abode of the Kurus. As he left, Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, followed him, and so did Bhimasena, Arjuna, the twins who were the sons of Madri and Pandu, the valiant Chekitana, King Dhrishtaketu from Chedi, Drupada, the king of Kashi, the maharatha Shikhandi, Dhrishtadyumna, Virata and his sons and the Kekayas. To ensure success, all these kshatriyas followed the bull among the kshatriyas.

'In the presence of the kings, having followed Govinda for some distance, the resplendent Dharmaraja Yudhishthira spoke these words to Keshava, who is the lord of all beings and is the eternal god of the gods. He is learned about dharma, steadfast and is wise about all beings. He is constant in his intelligence and does not follow wrong conduct because of desire, fear, greed or selfishness. He has all the qualities and is marked with the *srivatsa* sign.[30] Kounteya embraced him and gave him a message. "The lady[31] has reared us from childhood. Fasts and austerities are her nature and she is always devoted to auspicious rites. She is devoted in worship to gods and guests and servitude towards her elders. O Janardana! She is affectionate towards her sons and is loved by us. O destroyer of enemies! She has saved us from fear of Suyodhana and great death, like a boat saves one in the terrible ocean. O Madhava! She has always suffered hardships, though she does not deserve it. You should ask about her welfare. Comfort her, because she is overcome with grief over her sons. When you have greeted her, embrace her and tell her about the Pandavas. O destroyer of enemies! She did not deserve unhappiness. But ever since she got married, she has suffered from hardships and deceit in her father-in-law's house. O Krishna! O destroyer of enemies! My mother has suffered a lot. Will there be a time when this tide of suffering will turn, so that I can

give her happiness? When we were exiled, out of affection for her sons, she was miserable and ran after us. But we left the weeping one behind and left for the forest. O Keshava! One cannot die of grief, as long as she is alive. Our mother was honoured by the Anartas, but she was deeply grief-stricken because of her sons. O Krishna! O lord! Salute her on my behalf and also Kouravya Dhritarashtra and the kings who are our seniors. O Madhusudana! Embrace Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, the great king Bahlika, Drona's son, Somadatta and all the Bharatas separately, and the immensely wise Vidura, who is unfathomable in his intelligence, knowledgeable about dharma and the adviser of the Kurus." In the midst of the kings, when Yudhishthira had spoken to Keshava thus, he circumambulated Krishna and took his leave.

'Bibhatsu followed his friend, who was a bull among men. He told the unvanquished Dasharha, the slayer of enemy warriors. "O lord! O Govinda! All the kings know about our earlier consultations, concerning half of the kingdom. O mighty-armed one! I will be delighted if they give it to us courteously, without any disrespect. They will be saved from a great fear. But Dhritarashtra's son doesn't know about the right code of conduct. O Janardana! If he acts in a contrary way, I will certainly annihilate the kshatriyas." When Pandava spoke in this way, Vrikodara was delighted. Pandava's[32] form repeatedly shook because of his rage. While trembling, Kounteya emitted loud roars. Having heard Dhananjaya's words, his mind was filled with great delight. On hearing his roars, the archers trembled and all the mounts released dung and urine. Having thus spoken to Keshava and voiced his intentions, he[33] embraced Janardana and, having taken his leave, departed. All the kings also returned.

'Janardana progressed on his journey, drawn by the mounts Sainya and Sugriva. Under Daruka's[34] whip, Vasudeva's horses seemed to kiss the road and devour the sky. Along the road, the mighty-armed Keshava saw that many radiant rishis were stationed, shining with the resplendence of brahmanas. Janardana swiftly descended from his chariot and honoured them. He worshipped all the rishis in the proper way and asked, "Are all the worlds in good health? Is dharma followed? Do the other three varnas follow the instructions of brahmanas?" Having worshipped them with honours, Madhusudana said, "O illustrious ones! Have all of you been successful in your objectives? O illustrious ones! What is your purpose? What do you wish to be done? O illustrious ones! For what purpose have you descended on earth?" Jamadagni's son approached Madhusudana, his friend in earlier good deeds.[35] Embracing Govinda, he said, "O Dasharha! O immensely radiant one! The devarshis who are the performers of good deeds, the extremely learned brahmanas, the rajarshis and the venerable ascetics once witnessed the ancient battle between the gods and the asuras. O Janardana! They wish to see all the kshatriyas on earth and the kings gathered in the assembly hall, with you voicing what is true. O Keshava! O Madhava! We are going to witness that great spectacle, wishing to hear the words that you will speak, in conformity with dharma and

artha. O scorcher of enemies! You will speak to the Kurus in the midst of those kings. Bhishma, Drona and the others, the immensely intelligent Vidura and you, tiger among the Yadava lineage, will gather in that assembly hall. O Madhava! O Govinda! We wish to hear your celestial words, full of truth and welfare, and theirs too. O mighty-armed one! Let us take your leave now. We will see you again. O brave one! May your journey be without obstacles. We will see you in that assembly hall."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Ten mighty-armed maharathas, destroyers of enemy warriors, followed Devaki's son, with weapons in their hands. O destroyer of enemies! There were one thousand foot soldiers and riders. O king! There were hundreds of others, with plenty of provisions.'

Janamejaya asked, 'How did the great-souled Dasharha Madhusudana travel? What portents were seen when that immensely energetic one progressed?'

Vaishampayana said, 'When the great-souled one travelled, listen to the extraordinary portents. Some were divine, driven by destiny. Others were adverse portents. In the clear sky, there was thunder, with lightning. Behind him, Parjanya showered down fiercely, though there were no clouds. The seven great rivers, supreme among rivers, flow in an eastern direction.[36] All of them reversed direction. All the directions were reversed and nothing could be discerned. O king! Fires were ignited and the earth trembled. Hundreds of wells and water pots overflowed and water flowed out. The entire earth was covered in darkness. O king! Because of the dust, the directions and the sub-directions could not be seen. There was a loud roar in the sky, though nothing could be seen. O king! There were extraordinary things in every region. A storm from the south-western direction devastated Hastinapura. With a harsh and terrible roar, it uprooted a large number of trees. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Along whatever route Varshneya progressed, there was a pleasant breeze and everything was favourable. There was a shower of flowers, with a large number of lotuses. The roads became smooth and pleasant, without prickly grass and thorns. O king! Wherever the mighty-armed one went, he was honoured by brahmanas. The granter of riches was worshipped with madhuparka and flowers. Women gathered along the road and showered fragrant and wild flowers on the great-souled one. He passed the beautiful Shalibhavana, which had an abundance of crops. O bull among the Bharata lineage! It was a happy spot, where supreme dharma was followed. He saw many animals and beautiful villages, pleasant to the heart. There were diverse cities and many kingdoms. The people there were protected by the Bharatas and were always happy, happy in their hearts. They were without anxiety and were ignorant about any evil designs on the part of enemies. The residents of the city of Upaplavya came out in large numbers to see Vishvaksena. They stood along the road. All of them honoured the famous lord, who had

arrived in that country as a guest, blazing like a fire, with the homage that he deserved.

'Keshava, the slayer of enemy heroes, arrived in Vrikasthala. The clear sun's scattered rays were red. He swiftly descended from the chariot and performed the appropriate ablutions. He gave instructions that the chariot should be unyoked and seated himself for the evening rites. Having unharnessed the horses and tended to them, in accordance with the sacred texts,[37] Daruka removed their armour and released them. After he had done all that, Madhusudana said, "To accomplish Yudhishthira's objective, we will spend the night here." Getting to know about his intention, the men instantly set up camp there and obtained excellent food and drink. O king! The foremost brahmanas from the village, noble in birth and conduct, modest and devoted to the tasks of brahmanas, approached the great-souled Hrishikesha, the destroyer of enemies. They worshipped him with benedictions and auspicious words. Having worshipped the great-souled Dasharha, honoured by all the worlds, they offered him their houses, with all their riches. The lord told them that they had done enough and returned their homage in the appropriate way. Having entered their houses, he returned again,[38] in their company. Keshava offered succulent food to the brahmanas and himself ate in their company. All of them spent the night in comfort.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Having got to know from messengers about Madhusudana's departure, Dhritarashtra was filled with delight. He honoured the mighty-armed Bhishma and told him, Drona, Sanjaya, the immensely intelligent Vidura and Duryodhana and his advisers, "O descendant of the Kuru lineage![39] I have heard of a great and extraordinary wonder. Women, children and aged people are talking about it in every house. Some are doing it out of faith. Others are doing it in groups. Different accounts are circulating in squares and in assembly halls—the valorous Dasharha has arrived for the sake of the Pandavas. Madhusudana should always be revered and honoured by us. The course of the entire world depends on him. He is the lord of all beings. Madhava possesses fortitude, valour, wisdom and energy. That foremost among men should be revered because he is the eternal dharma. He must be worshipped for the sake of happiness. If he is not honoured, there is unhappiness. If Dasharha, the scorcher of enemies, is satisfied with our veneration, in the midst of all the kings, we will be successful in all our objectives. O scorcher of enemies! Make immediate arrangements for his worship. Erect pavilions along the route and let them be stocked with all desirable objects. O Gandhari's son![40] O mighty-armed one! Act so that satisfaction towards you is created in him. O Bhishma! What do you think?" Bhishma and all the others approved these words of King Dhritarashtra. They said that these words were excellent. Having obtained their approval, King Duryodhana began to look for beautiful sites for those pavilions. In one beautiful site after another, he had pavilions built and

filled them with every kind of gem, colourful seats that possessed many different qualities, women, fragrances, ornaments, fine garments, excellent food and drink of different types and perfumed garlands. The king donated all these. So that they could live in the village of Vrikasthala, King Kourava specially built a residence and filled it with many beautiful jewels. All these superhuman arrangements were made worthy of the gods. King Duryodhana then informed Dhritarashtra about what had been done. However, Dasharha Keshava ignored all those pavilions, with their many different kinds of jewels, and went to the abode of the Kurus.'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "O Kshatta![41] Janardana has set out from Upaplavya. He is now residing in Vrikasthala and will arrive here in the morning. Janardana is the lord of the Ahukas and the foremost among all the Satvatas. He is immensely intelligent, immensely valorous and immensely spirited. Madhava is the lord and the protector of the prosperous kingdom of the Vrishnis. The illustrious one is the great-grandfather of the three worlds. Happy in their minds, the Vrishnis and the Andhakas honour his wisdom, just as the Adityas, the Vasus and the Rudras listen to Brihaspati's intelligence. I will show my homage to the great-souled Dasharha. O one learned in dharma! Listen to what you will see. I will give him sixteen golden chariots. Each will be yoked to four excellent horses from the Bahlika region and they will be extremely dark in complexion. I will also give Keshava eight war elephants with tusks that are like poles and they will always ooze musth. Each will have eight attendants. I will give him one hundred servant maids who are beautiful and possess golden complexions. They have never given birth. I will give him an equal number of male servants. I will give him eighteen thousand woollen garments that are extremely pleasant to the touch. They have been brought by those who dwell in the mountainous regions. I will give him one thousand deerskins that have been brought from the country of China[42] and whatever else deserves to be given to Keshava. I will give him this extremely energetic and clear jewel that sparkles by day and night. I will give it to him, because Keshava deserves it. I will also give him a cart drawn by a mule, which can travel fourteen yojanas in a single day. Every day, I will give him eight times the food that his mounts and men can consume. With the exception of Duryodhana, all my sons and grandsons will adorn themselves, and mounting excellent chariots, will go out to meet Dasharha. Thousands of the best courtesans, beautiful, immensely fortunate and adorned with ornaments, will go out to meet Keshava on foot. Beautiful maidens, who have not been seen by men, will leave the city and go and meet Janardana and they will go without their veils. Let all the subjects of the city, women, men and children, see the great-souled Madhusudana, who is like the sun. Let all the directions be covered with large flags and pennants. Let the roads be sprinkled with water and cleaned of dust. Duhshasana's house is superior to

Duryodhana's house. Let it be quickly decorated for him. It is adorned with many beautiful pavilions and is pure and lovely. It is full of riches in every season. All my riches, and those of Duryodhana, are in that house. There is no doubt that Varshneya should be given everything that he deserves."'

748(85)

'Vidura said, "O king! You are extremely revered by the three worlds. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! You are loved by the world and respected by us. Having reached an age that leans towards the west,[43] whatever you say should not be against the sacred texts or reasoning. You are well established because you are old. O great king! The subjects know that dharma is established in you, like lines in rocks, rays in the sun and waves in the ocean. O lord of the earth! You are always honoured by the world because of your qualities. Together with your relatives, you must always seek to protect these qualities. Resort to honesty. Out of childishness, do not destroy your kingdom, your sons, your grandsons, your well-wishers and those you love. O king! What you wish to give Krishna, as a guest, is a lot. But Dasharha deserves all this and more, even the entire earth. But I truthfully say that you are not giving this to Krishna because of dharma or to show him affection, but because of your own self. It is because of deception and falsehood that you are giving him all these gifts. O king! Despite your external deeds, I know your inner secrets. O king! The five Pandavas only desire five villages. If you do not wish to give them that, how can there be peace? You wish to win over the mighty-armed Varshneya through riches and use this means to create a rift between him and the Pandavas. But I tell you truthfully that he cannot be separated from Dhananjaya through riches, effort or maligning.[44] I know Krishna's greatness. I know that his devotion is firm. I know that he will not give up Dhananjaya, who is as dear as his life itself. Janardana will look at nothing other than a pot full of water, enough to wash his feet, and nothing other than inquiries about his health. Therefore, show the great-souled and venerable one the hospitality that he desires. O king! Act accordingly, because Janardana is deserving of honour. Keshava has arrived, hoping for the welfare of the Kurus. O king! Give him that through which the objective may be attained. Dasharha desires peace between you and Duryodhana, and the Pandavas. O Indra among kings! Therefore, do what he says. O king! You are the father and they are your sons. You are aged and the others are children. Therefore, act like a father towards them, because they act like sons towards you."'

749(86)

'Duryodhana said, "Everything that Vidura has said about Krishna is true. Janardana is firmly devoted to the Parthas and it is impossible to separate them. O Indra among kings! Therefore, the many different kinds of riches you proposed to bestow on

Janardana as hospitality should never be given to him. Though Keshava deserves all that, this is not the time and the place. O king! Adhokshaja[45] will think that you are honouring him because of fear. O lord of the earth! It is my certain conviction that anything that causes disrespect should never be undertaken by a wise kshatriya. The divine and lotus-eyed Krishna deserves to be worshipped by the three worlds. I know everything about that. O lord! But one should not act so as to give him anything. That is the right course, now that war has been decided on. War cannot become peace through pretence."'

Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing these words, Bhishma, the grandfather of the Kurus, addressed these words to the king who was Vichitravirya's son. "Whether he is treated well or maltreated, Janardana will not be angered. Though he is insulted, Keshava is incapable of insulting others. O mighty-armed one! Whatever he has mentally decided as the right course of action cannot be thwarted by anyone through any means. Without any hesitation, we should do what the mighty-armed one asks us to do. Using Vasudeva as our salvation, we must swiftly make peace with the Pandavas. Janardana has dharma in his soul. He is certain to say that which is in conformity with dharma and artha. You should address him in affectionate words, together with your relatives."

'Duryodhana said, "O king! This prosperity is mine alone and there is no circumstance under which I will share it. O grandfather! I cannot bear to share it, and then continue to live. Listen to the great task that I have decided upon. I will capture Janardana, the refuge of the Pandavas. When he is captured, the Vrishnis, the entire earth and the Pandavas will submit. He will be here tomorrow morning. This must be accomplished so that Janardana does not get to know. Tell me how this can be done, so that we do not confront any danger."'

Vaishampayana said, 'When Dhritarashtra and his advisers heard these terrible words about causing violence to Krishna, they were distressed and distracted. Dhritarashtra addressed these words to Duryodhana. "If you are the protector of your subjects, do not speak in this way. This is not eternal dharma. Hrishikesha is a messenger and our beloved relative. He intends no evil towards the Kouravas. How can it be right that he should be captured?"

'Bhishma said, "O Dhritarashtra! This extremely evil son of yours is the ultimate. Though he is urged by his well-wishers, he chooses disaster over that which will ensure welfare. Because of his wicked followers, this wicked one has deviated from the path. But you continue to follow him, without paying heed to the words of your well-wishers. If this extremely evil son of yours and his advisers touch Krishna, whose deeds are unsullied, they will be destroyed in an instant. I cannot bear to listen any more to the fruitless words of this wicked, cruel and evil-minded one who has discarded dharma."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having said this, the aged one, foremost among the Bharatas, was extremely enraged. Bhishma, whose truth was his valour, arose and left the place.'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having arisen next morning, Krishna performed all his morning rites. He took leave of the brahmanas and left for the city. O king! Having taken leave of the mighty-armed one, who was about to leave, all the residents of Vrikasthala returned. Adorned, Dhritarashtra's sons, with the exception of Duryodhana, Bhishma, Drona and Kripa advanced to meet him when he arrived. O king! There were many inhabitants of the city too, desiring to see Hrishikesha. They came in many different kinds of vehicles and others were on foot. He met them along the road. Surrounded by Bhishma of the unsullied deeds, Drona and the sons of Dhritarashtra, he entered the city. The city was adorned in Krishna's honour. The royal roads were decorated with many different kinds of gems. O king! O bull among the Bharata lineage! There was no one who stayed at home—woman, aged or child. They all wished to see Vasudeva. O great king! At the time when Hrishikesha entered, no men stood along the royal road. They prostrated themselves in his honour. The great mansions were full of beautiful women and seemed to sway on the ground, because of that great weight. Because the royal road was full of men, the speed of Vasudeva's swift horses was restrained.

'Pundarikaksha, the destroyer of enemies, entered Dhritarashtra's white house. It was adorned with many pavilions. After passing through three rooms in the royal abode, the destroyer of enemies went to the king who was Vichitravirya's son. When Dasharha approached him, the immensely famous lord of men, who possessed the sight of wisdom, stood up, together with Drona, Bhishma, Kripa, Somadatta and the great king of Bahlika. All of them arose from their seats and honoured Janardana. Having approached the famous King Dhritarashtra and Bhishma, Varshneya swiftly honoured them with eloquent words. Madhusudana first honoured them in accordance with dharma. In accordance with age, Madhava then greeted the other kings. Janardana then met Drona and his famous son and Bahlika, Kripa and Somadatta. There was a large and golden throne there, exquisite in workmanship. On Dhritarashtra's instructions, Achyuta seated himself there. As is the custom, Dhritarashtra's priests offered Janardana a cow, madhuparka and water. With the rites due to a guest having been observed, Govinda, surrounded by the Kurus, stayed with all the Kurus for some time joking with them and asking all the relatives about their welfare. The immensely fortunate one was thus honoured and worshipped by Dhritarashtra. Having taken his leave of the king, the destroyer of enemies then left.

'Having met the Kurus in the appropriate way in that assembly of the Kurus, Madhava then went to Vidura's beautiful house. Vidura received Janardana with every kind of benediction and honoured Dasharha with every object of desire. After having greeted Govinda as a guest, Vidura, who was knowledgeable about every kind of dharma, asked Madusudana about the welfare of the sons of Pandu. Vidura was his beloved well-wisher, wise and always established in dharma, and bereft of any sins. Dasharha,

supreme among wise ones, could always see everything and told Kshatta everything about the Pandavas in detail, and their endeavours.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'After meeting Vidura, Janardana Govinda, the destroyer of enemies, went to meet his father's sister[46] in the afternoon. When she saw Krishna approach, radiant as a pleasant sun, Pritha embraced him around the neck. Remembering the Parthas, she began to weep. She had seen Varshneya Govinda after a long time and he was always a companion to her spirited sons. Pritha began to shed tears. When Krishna, lord among warriors, had seated himself and the rites due to a guest had been performed, with her voice choked with tears and with her mouth dry, she said, "They have always been devoted to serving their elders from childhood. They have wished each other well and have been similar in their minds. They were deprived of their kingdom through deceit and though they deserved to be with people, were banished to desolate regions. They were humble and had conquered anger and delight. They possessed the qualities of brahmanas. They spoke the truth. The Parthas have abandoned their beloved happiness and I have been left behind, in the midst of tears. They left for the forest and took my heart, with its roots, with them. O Keshava! How did the great-souled Pandavas deserve this? O son![47] They lived in that great forest, infested by lions, tigers and elephants. They lost their father in their childhood and I have always reared them. Without seeing their parents, how did they live in that great forest? O Keshava! Ever since childhood, the Pandavas have woken up to the sounds of conch shells, kettledrums, drums and flutes. At home, they were woken by the trumpeting of elephants, the neighing of horses and the roar of chariot wheels. There were the sounds of conch shells and drums and notes of flutes and veenas. There were sounds of brahmanas honouring the auspicious times of the day. They honoured brahmanas by distributing garments, gems and ornaments. The great-souled brahmanas blessed them with hymns and benedictions. In the best of palaces, they slept on the skins of *ranku* deer and awoke to chants uttered by the venerated, for those who deserve to be honoured. In the great forest, they heard the roars of cruel predators. O Janardana! They did not deserve this and they could not have slept there. O Madhusudana! They awoke to the sweet sounds of kettledrums, drums, conch shells and flutes, the singing of women and the praises of bards and minstrels. In that great forest, how could they awake to the roars of predatory beasts?

'"He is modest and firm in his truth. He is self-controlled and compassionate towards all beings. He has control over desire and hatred. He follows the path followed by the virtuous. He bears the extremely difficult burdens of Ambarisha, Mandhata, Yayati, Nahusha, Bharata, Dilipa, Shibi Oushinara and the ancient rajarshis. He is characterized by goodness of conduct. He is learned in dharma and follows the truth. He possesses all

the qualities and deserves to be the king of the three worlds. He is Ajatashatru, with dharma in his soul. He has the complexion of pure gold. He is best among all the Kurus in dharma, learning and conduct. He is handsome and has long arms. O Krishna! How is Yudhishthira?

'"Vrikodara has the strength of ten thousand elephants and the force of a storm. That Pandava is wrathful. But he is loved by his brother and always does what brings pleasure to him. O Madhusudana! He is the brave one who killed Kichaka and his relatives, the Krodhavashas, Hidimba and Baka. He is Shakra's equal in valour and the equal of the force of the wind in speed. He is Maheshvara's equal in rage. He is Bhima, supreme among warriors. That scorcher of enemies has controlled his anger, his strength and his intolerance. Despite his intolerance, the Pandava has controlled his soul and follows the instructions of his brother. The great-souled one is a mass of energy and his strength is supreme because of his infinite energy. O Janardana! Bhimasena is terrible in his appearance. O Varshneya! Tell me. How is Vrikodara now?

'"The strong Pandava in the middle has arms like clubs. O Krishna! O Keshava! With his two arms, Arjuna rivals the thousand-armed Arjuna[48] and always surpasses him. With a single thrust, he unleashes five hundred arrows. In archery, the Pandava is the equal of King Kartavirya. He is the equal of the sun in his energy. He is the equal of maharshis in his self-control. He is the equal of the earth in his forgiveness. He is the equal of the great Indra in his valour. O Madhusudana! With his valour, he brought all the kings under the suzerainty of the Kurus and they obtained a great, radiant and famous overlordship. All the Kouravas honour his terrible strength of arms. The Pandava is supreme among all the charioteers. Truth is his valour. The Pandavas seek refuge with him, like the gods with Vasava. He is your brother and your friend. How is Dhananjaya now?

'"He is compassionate towards all beings. He is restrained because of his modesty. He is great in the use of weapons. He is mild and delicate. He follows dharma and I love him. Sahadeva is a brave and great archer and shines in assemblies. O Krishna! He is devoted to serving his brothers. He is young and skilled in dharma and artha. O Madhusudana! His brothers always honour the conduct of the great-souled Sahadeva, whose conduct is always designed to ensure welfare. The brave Sahadeva is supreme among warriors and defers to his elders. He used to serve me. O Varshneya! Tell me about Madri's son.

'"He is delicate, young and brave. He is a handsome Pandava. O Krishna! He is always as loved by his brothers as their own lives, although he possesses a different body. Nakula is immensely strong and a great archer and his valour is diverse. O Krishna! My son has been reared in comforts. Is he well? O mighty-armed one! Will I again see Nakula? Since birth, he has been reared in comforts. He is delicate and a maharatha. He does not deserve this unhappiness. I cannot find peace if I am separated

from Nakula for even the twinkling of an eye. O brave one! But look at me. I am still alive.

'"O Janardana! Droupadi is the beloved of all my sons. She has been born in a noble lineage and possesses good conduct. She is endowed with all the qualities. She speaks the truth and chose the world of her husbands over the world of her sons.[49] Having left her beloved sons, she followed the Pandavas. She was born in a noble lineage and has been honoured with all the objects of desire. She is fortunate in every way. O Achyuta! How is the illustrious Droupadi? She has five husbands and they are brave warriors, equal to the fire. They are great archers. But Droupadi has only faced unhappiness. O destroyer of enemies! I have not seen Droupadi, who is truthful in speech, for fourteen years. Worrying about her sons, she must be tired out. Droupadi has such conduct, yet she has not obtained eternal happiness. It is then certain that a man does not obtain happiness because of his meritorious deeds. Bibhatsu, Yudhishthira, Bhimasena and the twins are not dearer to me than Krishna.[50] When I saw her brought to the assembly hall, it brought me greater pain than anything I had confronted before. Without wishing for it, Droupadi was brought before her fathers-in-law. While all the Kurus watched, she was brought to the assembly hall in a single garment. She was brought there by an ignoble one, who was overcome by anger and avarice.[51] Dhritarashtra, the great king Bahlika, Kripa, Somadatta and the distressed Kurus were present there. Among all those who were there in the assembly, I respect Kshatta[52] alone. A man becomes an arya because of what he does, not because of riches or learning. O Krishna! The great-souled Kshatta's great intelligence is profound. Because of his conduct, he is established like an ornament of the world."

'She was both distressed and happy at having seen Govinda arrive.[53] She began to recount the many kinds of unhappiness that she had faced. "O destroyer of enemies! Gambling with the dice and the killing of deer were sins practised by evil kings in earlier times. Could those have brought them happiness? I am tormented because Krishna[54] was molested in the assembly hall by Dhritarashtra's son, in the midst of the Kurus. This could not have been good. O scorcher of enemies! They were exiled to the forest and banished. O Janardana! There are many kinds of unhappiness that I have faced. O Keshava! They lived in concealment and were separated from their children. O scorcher of enemies! Nothing makes me and my sons suffer more than that we will now be deceived by Duryodhana in the fourteenth year. If happiness does not follow unhappiness, the fruits of meritorious deeds will be destroyed. I have not distinguished between the sons of Dhritarashtra and the Pandavas. O Krishna! That is the truth and because of this, I will see you and the Pandavas emerge from this battle, surrounded by prosperity, and with the enemies slain. They[55] have such spirit that they are incapable of being vanquished. But it is my father who should be blamed, and not I, or Suyodhana. While I was still playing as a child, with a ball in my hands, my father gave me away to

Kuntibhoja, like a wicked man gives away riches.[56] I was given to Kuntibhoja, a friend, as a mark of great-souled friendship. O scorcher of enemies! I have been deceived by my father and my fathers-in-law. O Krishna! I have been extremely unhappy. What has been the point of my being alive? When I was giving birth to Savyasachi, a voice told me in the night, 'Your son will conquer the earth and his fame will touch heaven. Having killed the Kurus in a battle among men, Dhananjaya Kounteya will obtain the kingdom and will perform three sacrifices with his brothers.' I have never doubted this. I bow down to what dharma has ordained and to the great Krishna. Dharma always sustains subjects. O Varshneya! If there is any dharma, all this will become true. O Krishna! You will accomplish everything that has been said. O Madhava! I am a widow. My prosperity has been destroyed and I have enemies. But nothing distresses me as much as separation from my sons. I do not see Dhananjaya, the wielder of the bow Gandiva, and supreme among those who are skilled in the use of all weapons. How can there be peace in my heart? O Govinda! I have not seen Yudhishthira, Dhananjaya, the twins and Vriokodara for fourteen years. Men perform funeral ceremonies[57] for those whose lives have been destroyed. O Janardana! They seem to be dead to me, and I to them. O Madhava! Tell King Yudhishthira, who has dharma in his soul, 'O son! Your dharma is diminishing. Your deeds are in vain.' O Vasudeva! Shame on those who live like me, under the protection of others. It is better not to exist, than to obtain life through such inferior means. Also tell Dhananjaya and Vrikodara, who is always ready, 'The reason why a kshatriya gives birth to sons, and the appropriate time, has arrived. The time has come. And if the time passes, no matter how respected you are by the worlds, you will do that which is extremely cruel. If you act in this cruel way, I will abandon you for an eternity. When the time has arrived, one should even give up one's own life.' Tell Madri's two sons, who are always devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas. 'Even at the cost of your lives, choose the comforts that can only be obtained through valour.' O Purushottama! For a man who lives according to the dharma of kshatriyas, there is always delight at obtaining objects that are gained through valour. O mighty-armed one! Go there and speak to brave Pandava Arjuna, supreme among those who wield all the weapons. 'Follow the path adopted by Droupadi.'[58] You know that when Bhima and Arjuna are extremely enraged, they can despatch even the gods on the final destination.[59] It was an insult to them that Krishna[60] was brought to the assembly hall and Duhshasana and Karna addressed her in harsh words. While the foremost among the Kurus looked on, Duryodhana assailed the intelligent Bhimasena, and will now witness the consequences. Having once embarked on an enmity, Vrikodara cannot be pacified. Even an old enmity with Bhima cannot be pacified until that destroyer of enemies has brought an end to all his foes. The robbing of the kingdom, the defeat at the game of dice and the exile of my sons has not caused me as much of unhappiness, as that of the large and dark lady brought to the assembly hall in a single garment. She was made to

listen to harsh words. What can be greater misery than that? She was in her seasons then.[61] The one with the beautiful thighs has always been devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas. Though she had protectors, Krishna[62] found no one to protect her then. O Madhusudana! But my sons and I have you as a protector, and Rama,[63] supreme among strong ones, and maharatha Pradyumna. O Purushottama! I can therefore bear all these miseries now, because the invincible Bhima and Vijaya,[64] who cannot be dislodged, are alive." She was overcome with grief because of her sons.

'Shouri, friend to the Parthas, comforted his father's sister, Pritha. "O sister of my father! Where is there a woman like you in this world? You are the daughter of King Shura and went to the lineage of the Ajamidhas.[65] You have been born in a great lineage and were transplanted from one lake to another. You are a goddess who is fortunate in every way. You have been greatly honoured by your husband. You have given birth to warriors. You were the wife of a warrior. You are adorned with all the qualities. O immensely wise one! Someone like you can tolerate both happiness and unhappiness. Sleep, laziness, anger, delight, hunger, thirst, cold and heat have been conquered by the Parthas. They are always engaged in that which brings bliss to warriors. The Parthas have given up the happiness of ordinary people. They are always engaged in the happiness that brings delight to heroes. Those immensely strong ones are great in their endeavour. They are not satisfied with mere trifles. Those who are patient serve that which is ultimate. Those who are mediocre love the happiness of ordinary people. Those who are patient bear supreme hardships for the sake of superhuman comforts, and obtain ultimate delight, not enjoyment that is mediocre. They consider the ultimate to be happiness and anything that is intermediate to be unhappiness. The Pandavas and Krishna[66] offer you their respects. Having conveyed that they are well, they ask whether you are well. You will soon see the Pandavas in good health, having accomplished all their objectives, the lords of all the worlds and surrounded by prosperity, with their enemies slain." Having been thus reassured, Kunti overcame the darkness of ignorance, though she still suffered from grief on account of her sons. She replied to Janardana, "O Madhusudana! O mighty-armed one! O Krishna! O scorcher of enemies! Do whatever you see and think to be good for their sake, without transgressing dharma and without resorting to deceit. O Krishna! I know about the influence of your truth and your noble birth, and the intelligence and valour that you display in establishing your friends. In our lineage, you are dharma, you are truth and you are the greatness of austerities. You are the saviour. You are the great brahman. Everything is established in you. Everything will be as you say. Truth is established in you." Govinda took his leave of her and circumambulated her. The mighty-armed one left for Duryodhana's residence.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Having taken his leave of Pritha and circumambulating her, Shouri Govinda, the destroyer of enemies, went to Duryodhana's residence. It possessed supreme prosperity and was like Purandara's[67] abode. Without being stopped by the gatekeepers, he passed through three rooms. The immensely famous one then ascended into a palace that was radiant with prosperity. It was like a cloud in the sky and arose like the peak of a mountain. Surrounded by the Kurus and thousands of kings, he saw the mighty-armed son of Dhritarashtra seated there. He also saw Duhshasana, Karna and Shakuni Soubala, seated near Duryodhana. Dasharha approached. The immensely famous son of Dhritarashtra arose, together with his advisers, and honoured Madhusudana. Varshneya Keshava met Dhritarashtra's son and his advisers and the kings and greeted them, in accordance with their age. Achyuta seated himself on a golden couch that had been constructed well. It was strewn with many kinds of covers. After offering him a cow and madhuparka, Kourava offered Janardana his house and his kingdom. All the Kurus, together with the kings, honoured him and having seated himself, Govinda was as radiant as the pleasant sun. Then King Duryodhana offered Varshneya, supreme among victorious ones, some food. But Keshava declined.

'In that assembly of Kurus, Duryodhana then spoke to Krishna. His tones were mild, but there was wickedness in his heart. Glancing towards Karna, Kourava said, "O Janardana! We have offered you food, drink, garments and beds. These have been brought for you. Why do you not accept? You have offered help to both sides. You are engaged in the welfare of both. O Madhava! You are Dhritarashtra's beloved relative. O Govinda! You know everything about dharma and artha. O wielder of the chakra and the club! I wish to hear about your reasons." Having been thus addressed, the immensely intelligent Govinda, grasped his own mighty arms and replied in a voice that sounded like a flood or a cloud. The words were completely articulated. They were distinct and were pronounced correctly, without any slurring. The lotus-eyed one told the king these supreme words about his reasons. "Messengers enjoy and accept the honours when they have been successful in their objectives. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! You, together with your advisers, can honour me after I have been successful in my objective." Having been thus addressed, Dhritarashtra's son replied to Janardana, "You should not act in this improper way towards us. O Madhusudana! O Govinda! Whether you are successful or unsuccessful, we have tried to honour you and have failed. O Madhusudana! We do not know the reason why you have done this. O Purushottama! We offered you the homage in an act of affection. O Govinda! We have no enmity with you, nor any quarrel. Reflecting on this, you should not have spoken as you have." Having been thus addressed, Dasharha Janardana glanced at Dhritarashtra's son, together with his advisers, and laughed and said, "I never transgress dharma for the sake of desire, anger, hatred, self-interest in gaining objects, debate or avarice. Food should be accepted because of love, or because of necessity. O king! But I do not have

affection for you. Nor am I in need. O king! Without any reason, you have hated the Pandavas from birth. All of them are your brothers and possess all the qualities. They have acted kindly towards you. This irrational hatred of the Pandavas is not warranted. The Pandavas are established in dharma. Who can speak against them for any reason? He who hates them hates me. He who follows them, follows me. Know that I am immersed like a single soul in the Pandavas, who act in accordance with dharma. He who follows desire and anger and, because of his delusion, hates those who possess qualities is known to be the worst among men. He is confounded because of his avarice and anger. He is foolish in the way he regards his relatives who have the fortunate qualities. He has not controlled his soul and has not been able to conquer his anger. His prosperity will be swiftly destroyed. But one who possesses all the qualities and acts out of affection in the heart acts out of affection and conquers everyone. Fame is established in him for a long time. I think that all this food has been tainted and cannot be accepted. It is my view that I should only eat the food offered by Kshatta." Having spoken these words to the intolerant Duryodhana, the mighty-armed one left the white mansion of Dhritarashtra's son. The mighty-armed and immensely intelligent Vasudeva departed. He went to the abode of the great-souled Vidura.

'While the mighty-armed one stayed in Vidura's house, Drona, Kripa, Bhishma, Bahlika and all the Kurus went to visit him. The Kurus told Madhusudana, "O Varshneya! We are offering you our gems and our houses." However, the immensely energetic Madhusudana told the Kouravas, "All of you must leave. I have been honoured in every kind of way." When the Kurus had left, Kshatta made every effort, with every object of desire, to honour the unvanquished Dasharha. Kshatta brought large amounts of food and drink that was pure and excellent for great-souled Keshava. Madhusudana first satisfied the brahmanas with this. Krishna gave supreme gifts to those who knew the Vedas. Like Vasava with the Maruts, he then enjoyed Vidura's pure and excellent food.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'At night, after he had eaten and rested, Vidura told him, "O Keshava! It was not a wise decision for you to come. O Janardana! That ignorant one acts counter to artha and dharma. He insults those who deserve respect, though he himself craves for respect. He ignores the instructions of the aged. The foolish and evil-souled one goes against dharma and the sacred texts. O Janardana! Dhritarashtra's wicked son is incapable of being controlled by his superiors. His soul is full of desire. He thinks himself to be wise. He harms his friends and is suspicious of everyone. He does not do what he should. He is ungrateful. He has given up dharma and is addicted to falsehood. He is full of these and many other vices. Because of this, he will not accept your advice and will not accept what is good for him. O Madhusudana! He sees these

soldiers who have been brought together on this earth and without examining his own soul, in his foolishness, thinks that his objectives have been accomplished. Dhritarashtra's evil-minded son will not accept peace. He has decided that Karna alone is capable of defeating all the others. He has the greatest faith in Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Karna, Drona's son and Jayadratha. Therefore, his mind is not set on peace. O Janardana! The sons of Dhritarashtra, together with Karna, have made up their minds that the Parthas will not be capable of countering Bhishma, Drona and Kripa. O Keshava! Because of brotherly feelings, you are endeavouring to bring about peace. But all the sons of Dhritarashtra have resolved that they will not return to the Pandavas what is rightly theirs. Any words addressed towards them will be pointless. O Madhusudana! When good and bad advice is equal, a wise man does not speak, like a singer who is restrained in the midst of the deaf. O Madhava! Those foolish ones have no reverence for others. You should not speak to them, like brahmanas don't to *chandalas*.[68] Because of his strength, this foolish one will not pay heed to your words. Therefore, it will be fruitless for you to speak any words to him. O Krishna! It does not appeal to me that you should descend in the midst, when all these evil-minded ones are gathered together. They are evil in intelligence. They are wicked. They are many and they are evil in intelligence. O Krishna! It does not appeal to me that you should speak words in their midst. Because of his delusion and insolence, he does not listen to his elders and accept what is superior. Because of his age, insolence, delusion and intolerance, he will not accept what is good for him. He possesses a strong army. O Madhava! If you speak to him, I have a great anxiety that he will not act in accordance with your words. O Janardana! All the sons of Dhritarashtra have arrived at the conclusion that even Indra, together with the immortals, is incapable of vanquishing them in battle. Among those who are thus inclined and overcome by desire and anger, your words will be ineffective, no matter how effective they may be. The evil and foolish one is stationed in the midst of his army, with elephants, soldiers, chariots and horses. Duryodhana thinks that he has no reason to be afraid of anyone else's anger and that he has conquered the entire earth. Dhritarashtra's son aspires for a great kingdom on earth, without any rivals. No peace can be obtained from such a person, one who thinks that he has obtained all the prosperity that can be achieved. The earth has been cooked by destiny. All the warriors on earth have assembled together, for Duryodhana's sake and to fight with the Pandavas. The kings and the lords of the earth have gathered together. All of them have old enmities with you.[69] O Krishna! It is you who have robbed the kings of their possessions. It is because of their anxiety from you that these brave ones have sought refuge with Dhritarashtra's son and have gathered around Karna. They are with Duryodhana and are ready to give up their own selves. All the warriors are happy at the prospect of fighting with the Pandavas. O brave Dasharha! It is not my view that you should enter into their midst. There are many evil-minded ones gathered

there. O destroyer of enemies! Why should you go in the midst of these foes? O mighty-armed one! Even the gods are incapable of withstanding you in any way. O slayer of enemies! I know your power, manliness and intelligence. O Madhava! I have the same affection for you as I have for the Pandavas. I speak because of my affection, great reverence and friendship."'

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'Bhagavan said, "You have spoken as an immensely wise and discerning one should. You have spoken as a well-wisher like you should speak to a well-wisher like me. This is truly in accordance with dharma and artha and befits you. The words spoken by you are truly like those spoken by a father and a mother. What you have told me is true, appropriate and worthy of being followed. O Vidura! But listen attentively to the reason why I have come. O Kshatta! I have come to the Kouravas with complete knowledge about the evil soul of Dhritarashtra's son and the enmity of the kshatriyas. However, one who will relieve the earth, with all its horses, chariots and elephants, of her burden and free her from the noose of death, will achieve supreme dharma. If a man strives for an act of dharma to the best of his capability, even if he is not successful, I have no doubt that he obtains merits. Those who are knowledgeable about dharma know that if one thinks of an evil deed in one's mind, but does not consent to do it, one does not suffer from the fruits. O Kshatta! Therefore, I will sincerely try to bring about peace between the Kurus and the Srinjayas. Otherwise, they will be destroyed in this war. This extremely terrible calamity has now arisen before the Kurus. This is because of Karna and Duryodhana, but all the others are also responsible. The wise say that one who does not rush, to the best of his capacity, to help a friend who faces distress is cruel. A friend should be prevented from performing an improper act, even by grasping him by the hair. If one strives for this, to the best of one's strength, one cannot be blamed. My words are appropriate, pure, beneficial and in conformity with dharma and artha. O Vidura! Together with his advisers, Dhritarashtra's son should accept them. I will sincerely try for the welfare of the sons of Dhritarashtra, the Pandavas and all the kshatriyas on earth. Though I strive for welfare, if Duryodhana suspects me, my heart will at least be satisfied that I have been freed from a debt.[70] If a friend does not intervene, to the best of his endeavours, and maintains a distance, when there is dissension among relatives, the wise know that he is not a friend. Those who do not know about dharma and are foolish and hostile should not say that Krishna, though capable, did not restrain the angry Kurus and Pandavas. I have come here to help both sides. After having made the effort, I will no longer be blamed by men. After having listened to my beneficial words, in conformity with dharma and artha, if that child ignores them, he will come under the power of destiny. If I can bring about peace with the Kurus, without harming the cause of the Pandavas, I will accomplish a great

objective and earn merit, saving the Kurus from the noose of death. If Dhritarashtra's sons pay attention to my virtuous and wise words, full of dharma and artha and designed to ensure welfare, I will earn the respect of the Kurus for having come here. All the kings of the earth together are not sufficient to withstand me when I am enraged, like deer before a lion."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having spoken these words, the bull of the Vrishni lineage and the source of joy to the Yadu lineage lay down to sleep on a bed that was pleasant to the touch.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'While these two intelligent ones were conversing in this way, the night, auspicious with the nakshatras, passed. The great-souled Vidura was listening to many words about dharma, artha and kama, diverse in their purport, sentences and syllables, spoken by the infinitely energetic Krishna and he did not desire that the night should pass. Neither did Krishna. Then, many bards and minstrels with good voices awoke Keshava, to the sound of conch shells and drums. Dasharha Janardana, bull among all those of the Satvata lineage, arose and performed all the necessary morning ablutions. Having bathed in water, meditating and offering oblations into the fire, Madhava adorned himself in ornaments and worshipped the rising sun.

'Duryodhana and Shakuni Soubala came to the unvanquished Krishna Dasharha, while he was performing the morning rites. They told Krishna, "O Govinda! Dhritarashtra has arrived in the assembly hall with all the Kurus, with Bhishma at the forefront, and all the other kings and lords of the earth. They are waiting for you, like the immortals await Shakra in heaven." Govinda welcomed them with extremely conciliatory words. Then, when the clear sun had risen, Janardana, the scorcher of enemies, gave the brahmanas gold, garments, cows and horses. When the unvanquished Dasharha had given many gems and was waiting, his charioteer arrived and greeted him. On the instructions of the immensely intelligent one, the divine chariot was brought. It roared like a monsoon cloud and was decorated with every kind of jewel. Janardana circumambulated the fire and the brahmanas. He donned the Koustubha jewel and was radiant in his supreme prosperity. Surrounded by the Kurus and protected by the Vrishnis, Shouri Krishna, the joy of all the Yadavas, ascended the chariot. After Dasharha had ascended, Vidura, knowledgeable in dharma, foremost among all beings and supreme among all those who uphold dharma, also ascended. Duryodhana and Shakuni Soubala followed Krishna, the scorcher of enemies, on a second chariot. Satyaki, Kritavarma and maharatha Vrishnis followed Krishna on chariots, horses and elephants. As they travelled, the beautiful and colourful chariots roared. They were decorated in gold and were yoked to excellent horses. In a short while, Krishna, resplendent in his wisdom and prosperity, came upon a large road that was frequented

by rajarshis. The dust had been swept and it had been sprinkled.[71] As Dasharha proceeded, there was continuous music from drums, conch shells and other musical instruments. Brave and young warriors from all the worlds, scorchers of enemies and with the valour of lions, surrounded Shouri's chariot as he travelled. Many thousand of others preceded Krishna in colourful and wonderful attire, with swords, spears and other weapons. There were more than one hundred elephants and thousands of supreme horses that followed the brave and unvanquished Dasharha as he progressed. The entire city of the Kurus was full of children, women and the aged, who wished to see Janardana, the scorcher of enemies, arrive on his chariot. There were many women who crowded on the balconies, so that the foundations seemed to sway under the burden. He proceeded slowly, honoured by the Kurus, listening to the many words, glancing in all directions and returning the homage to those who should be honoured.

'Keshava and his followers then reached the assembly hall. The sounds of conch shells and flutes filled all the directions, resounding in the sky. The entire assembly of infinitely energetic kings trembled in delight, desiring Krishna's arrival. As Krishna neared, the lords of men trembled when they heard the roar of the chariot, with a noise like that of a monsoon cloud. Shouri, bull among all the Satvatas, reached the gate of the assembly hall and dismounted from the chariot, which was like Mount Kailasa. Similar to clouds and mountains, it was radiant in its energy. He entered the assembly hall, which was like the abode of the great Indra. The immensely famous one held Vidura and Satyaki with his two hands. O king! He overshadowed the Kurus with his radiance, like the sun over the nakshatras. Karna and Duryodhana were in front of Vasudeva. Kritavarma and the Vrishnis were behind Krishna. With Dhritarashtra at the forefront, Bhishma, Drona and all the others arose from their seats and honoured Janardana. When Dasharha arrived, the immensely famous lord of men who possessed wisdom as his sight[72] arose, together with Bhishma, Drona and the others. When the great king Dhritarashtra, lord of men, arose, all the thousands of kings stood up in every direction. On Dhritarashtra's instructions, a golden seat that was excellent in every way had been prepared for Krishna. Madhava greeted the king, Bhishma and Drona with a smile. The one with dharma in his soul greeted the other kings in accordance with age. The kings, the lords of the earth and all the Kurus worshipped Keshava Janardana when he entered the assembly hall. Dasharha, the scorcher of enemies and the conqueror of enemy cities, stood in the midst of the kings and saw that the rishis had assembled in the sky. On seeing the rishis, with Narada at the forefront, Dasharha softly told Bhishma, Shantanu's son, "O king! The rishis have arrived to witness this assembly on earth. They should be invited, offered seats and shown a great deal of honours. No one is capable of being seated as long as they don't have seats. Let the sages, who have controlled their souls, be immediately worshipped." On seeing the rishis arrive at the gate of the assembly hall, Shantanu's son ordered the servants to quickly bring seats for them. They

brought many large and beautiful seats, smooth and decorated with jewels and gold. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When they had accepted the *argha*,[73] they seated themselves. Krishna seated himself, and so did the kings in their respective seats. Duhshasana showed Satyaki his excellent seat. Vivimshati brought a golden seat for Kritavarma. The great-souled and intolerant Karna and Duryodhana shared the same seat, not far away from Krishna. O lord of the earth! Shakuni, the king of Gandhara, was protected by all those from Gandhara and sat on a seat, together with his son. Vidura sat on a seat that was crested with jewels and was covered with white deerskin. His seat touched the seat where the immensely wise Shouri was seated.

'For a long time, all the kings glanced towards Dasharha. They looked at Janardana, as if they were drinking amrita, and were not satisfied. Janardana was attired in a yellow garment and had the complexion of an *atasi* flower.[74] He sat in the midst of that assembly hall, like a jewel that has been set in gold. With their minds on Govinda, all of them were seated and silent. Not a man who was there said anything.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'When all the kings had seated themselves and were silent, Krishna, whose teeth were excellent, began to speak in a voice that rumbled like a drum or like a cloud at the end of the summer. Madhava addressed Dhritarashtra so that everyone in the assembly hall could hear him.

'"O descendant of the Bharata lineage! May there be peace between the Kurus and the Pandavas, without any endeavours at war on the part of the warriors. That is the reason why I have come. O king! I have nothing else to say, no other words that can be beneficial. O destroyer of enemies! You know everything that deserves to be known. O lord of the earth! This lineage of yours is supreme among all the kings. It is known for its learning and conduct and possesses all the qualities. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Compassion, sympathy, kindness, non-violence, uprightness, forgiveness and truthfulness—all these distinguish the Kurus. O king! Belonging to a lineage that is great in these ways, an improper act on your part is especially to be deplored. O supreme among the Kurus! O father![75] You are foremost among those who restrain the Kurus when they act in accordance with falsehood, whether with outsiders or insiders. O Kouravya! With Duryodhana leading the way, these sons of yours have turned their backs on dharma and artha and have strayed into violence. They are wicked. They have transgressed honour. They have lost their senses because of their avarice, even towards their chief relatives. O bull among men! You know this. An extremely terrible calamity has arisen before the Kurus. O Kouravya! If it is ignored, it will destroy the earth. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If you wish to do so, you are capable of pacifying this. O bull among the Bharata lineage! It is my view that it will not be difficult to obtain peace. O king! Peace depends on you. O lord of the earth! It depends on me. O

Kouravya! Establish[76] your sons and I will establish the others.[77] O Indra among kings! Your sons and their followers must obey your instructions, because if they act in accordance with your instructions, that will ensure their great welfare. O king! What is beneficial for you will also be beneficial for the Pandavas. They wish to be instructed by you, while I endeavour for peace. O lord of the earth! Reflect on the consequences and then act accordingly. O lord of men! You are capable of uniting the Bharatas. O king! Protected by the Pandavas, you will be established in dharma and artha. O lord of men! However much you try, you will not obtain people like them. When the great-souled Pandavas protect you, not even Indra with the gods can withstand you. How can kings? O bull among the Bharata lineage! Who will wish to fight against a side that has Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Karna, Vivimshati, Ashvatthama, Vikarna, Somadatta, Bahlika, Saindhava, Kalinga, Kamboja, Sudakshina, Yudhishthira, Bhimasena, Savyasachi, the twins and the immensely energetic maharatha Satyaki? O destroyer of enemies! With the Kurus and the Pandavas, you will become invincible before your enemies and will become the unrivalled lord of the world. O lord of the earth! O scorcher of enemies! Lords of the earth who are your equal and kings who are your superior will seek alliances with you. Protected in every direction by your sons, grandsons, brothers, fathers and well-wishers, you will live happily. O lord of the earth! Give primacy to their interests and treat them well, as you have in the past, and you will enjoy the entire earth. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Together with the Pandavas and your own,[78] you will triumph over enemies and this will be in your own interests. O scorcher of enemies! O lord of men! If you are united with your sons and advisers, you will enjoy land that will be conquered by them.

'"O great king! But if there is war, a great destruction can be seen. O king! There will be destruction on both sides. What dharma do you see in that? The Pandavas may be killed in battle, or your immensely strong sons. O king! O bull among the Bharata lineage! Tell me the happiness that you will feel then. They are brave ones, skilled in the usage of weapons, and all of them, the Pandavas and your own, wish to fight. Save them from a great danger. If there is a battle, we will not see all the Kurus, or the Pandavas. Brave ones will be destroyed on both sides. Charioteers will kill charioteers. O supreme among kings! All the kings of earth have gathered together. They are under the influence of anger and will destroy your subjects. O king! Save the world and do not destroy your subjects. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! If you return to your natural state, some remnants may be left. They are pure. They are generous. They are modest. They are aryas. They are born of pure lineages. They are related to one another. O king! Save them from this great danger. Let the lords of the earth meet each other in auspicious circumstances. Let them eat and drink together and let them return to their respective homes, with excellent garments and beautiful garlands, and duly honoured. O scorcher of enemies! Let the intolerance and enmity be restrained. O bull among the

Bharata lineage! When so much of your age has elapsed, let the affection that you once felt for the Pandavas return again, now and for always. They lost their father when they were children and were reared by you. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Protect them in a proper way, as you would your own sons. You should especially protect them when they face hardships. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Otherwise, your dharma and your artha will be destroyed. O king! The Pandavas have conveyed their homage and seek your favours, saying, 'On your instructions, we and our followers have faced unhappiness. We have dwelt for twelve years in the forest. We lived for a thirteenth year in concealment, unknown to others. We spent that time, certain that our father would not deviate from the agreement. O father! We have adhered to the agreement. The brahmanas know this. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Therefore, adhere to the agreement with us, as we have. O king! We have suffered many hardships. We should now obtain our share of the kingdom. Since you know about dharma and artha, it is for you to save us. Seeing that you are our senior, we have borne many hardships. Therefore, act towards us as a mother or a father. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The conduct of a disciple towards his preceptor is supreme. If we deviate from the path, it is for the father to establish us there. O king! Establish us on the right path and follow that yourself.' O bull among the Bharata lineage! Your sons have said this to the assembly. 'To those who know about dharma and are in the assembly hall, anything inappropriate is improper, such as when dharma is destroyed by adharma and truth by a falsehood. If this happens in the sight of those who are in the assembly hall, they are themselves killed. Dharma has been pierced by adharma and has come to this assembly hall. If the stake is not taken out, those who are in the assembly hall are themselves pierced. Dharma destroys them, like a river uproots the trees along its banks.' O bull among the Bharata lineage! Those who can see dharma, and are silently waiting for it to manifest itself have spoken what is true, righteous and just. O lord of men! What can you tell them, except returning their share?

'"Let the lords of the earth who are in this assembly hall speak. O bull among the kshatriyas! If I have spoken in accordance with dharma and artha, if I have spoken the truth, free those kshatriyas from the noose of death. O best of the Bharata lineage! Make peace. Do not come under the control of anger. As is proper, return to the Pandavas their share of the ancestral kingdom. O scorcher of enemies! Be successful with your sons and enjoy the prosperity. O lord of men! You know that Ajatashatru is always established in the dharma of the righteous and you know his conduct towards you and your sons. There was an attempt to burn him. There was an attempt to exile him. But he has returned again to you as a refuge. You and your sons banished him to Indraprastha. Dwelling there, he brought all the lords of the earth under his suzerainty. O king! But he has always placed you above him and has never crossed you. When he conducted himself in this way, Soubala conquered him through ultimate deceit, because he coveted

the kingdom, the riches and the grain. When he was reduced to such a state, Krishna[79] was brought to the assembly hall. But Yudhishthira, whose soul is unfathomable, did not swerve from the dharma of kshatriyas. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I wish their welfare and yours, dharma, artha and happiness. O king! Do not destroy your subjects. O lord of the earth! Control your sons, who have overstepped the limits of greed and think that which is not artha to be artha, and that which is artha to be not artha. The Parthas, the destroyers of enemies, are stationed, ready to serve you and ready to fight. O king! O scorcher of enemies! Station yourself in what you perceive to be healthy."'

Vaishampayana said, 'In their hearts, all the lords of the earth welcomed these words. But no one present ventured to speak first.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'When the great-souled Keshava spoke these words, all those who were in the assembly hall sat immobile in their seats, their body hair standing up. No man present ventured to voice a reply. All the kings thought in their hearts. All the kings there remained silent.

'Jamadagni's son[80] then spoke these words in that assembly of the Kurus, "O king! Listen to the example that I am going to cite. Do not entertain any doubt about it not being true. When you have heard it, if you so think fit, decide on what is best for you. In earlier times, there was a king named Dambhodbhava. He conquered the entire earth. We have heard that he enjoyed the entire earth. When night had passed, this valorous maharatha would always awake in the morning and ask brahmanas and kshatriyas, 'Is there anyone, a shudra, a vaishya, a kshatriya or a brahmana who wields weapons, who is my equal or superior in battle?' Saying this, the king roamed around the earth. He was so intoxicated with great insolence that he thought of no one else. There were noble and learned brahmanas who feared nothing. They cautioned the king against his repeated expressions of pride. But though he was forbidden, that wicked one kept questioning those brahmanas. He was vain and intoxicated with his prosperity. Those great-souled brahmanas were ascetics. They observed the vows of the Vedas. Blazing with anger, they told the insolent king, 'There are two lions among men who have fought in battles in many lives. O king! There is no way that you will be their equal.' Having been thus addressed, the king again asked those brahmanas, 'Where are those brave ones? Where have they been born? What are their deeds? Who are they?' The brahmanas replied, 'We have heard that they are the two ascetics Nara and Narayana. They have come to this world of men. O king! Fight with them. It is said that the great-souled Nara and Narayana are tormenting themselves with great austerities in some undetermined region of Gandhamadana.'"

'Rama[81] said, "The king gathered a large army with six divisions. He intolerantly marched to where those unvanquished ones dwelt. He went to the uneven and terrible

Mount Gandhamadana. He advanced, looking for those two unvanquished ascetics. He saw those supreme among men, lean from hunger and thirst, their veins holding them together. They were afflicted by the cold, the wind and the heat. He approached them, touched their feet and asked about their welfare. They honoured the king with roots, fruits, a seat and water and asked him, 'What can be done for you?' Dambhodbhava replied, 'The earth has been conquered with my arms and all the enemies have been slain. I have now come to this mountain, wishing to fight with you. Grant that to me as a mark of hospitality. I have desired this for a long time.' Nara and Narayana said, 'O supreme among kings! Anger and avarice have been banished from this hermitage. There are no fights in this hermitage. Where are the weapons and where is the malice? Go and desire a fight elsewhere. There are many kshatriyas on earth.' Though spoken to in this way, he kept on insisting. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They refused and repeatedly tried to placate him.

'"But Dambhodbhava was eager to fight and challenged the ascetics. O Kourava! Nara then picked up some blades of grass in his fist and told him, 'O kshatriya! You desire to fight. Come and fight. Bring all your weapons and prepare your army. From now onwards, I will destroy your love for war forever.' Dambhodbhava replied, 'O ascetic! If you think that is enough of a weapon to be used against us, then I will fight with you. I have come here desiring a fight.' Having said this, desiring to kill the ascetic with his army, Dambhodbhava enveloped him from all directions with a shower of arrows. Those terrible arrows were capable of piercing the bodies of others. But the sage repulsed them all with his blades of grass. Then the unvanquished one released a blade of grass as a terrible weapon. It was incapable of being countered and an extraordinary event took place. Through the power of maya, the sage used that blade of grass to slice off the eyes, ears and noses of the soldiers. The king saw that the sky was white with these blades of grass. He fell down at Nara's feet and prayed for salvation. Nara is a safe sanctuary for those who desire it. He told the king who had sought refuge, 'Have the qualities of a brahmana. Have dharma in your soul. And do not act in this way again. Overcome by insolence, do not ever insult anyone again, whether he is inferior or superior. O king! That will ensure your supreme welfare. Obtain wisdom. Overcome avarice. Be without vanity. Have control over your soul. Be self-controlled and forgiving. Be gentle and peaceful. O king! Protect your subjects. You have our leave to go. Be fortunate. Do not act in this way again. On our request, ask the brahmanas about their welfare.' Then the king bowed down before the feet of those great-souled ones. He returned to his own city and accumulated a lot of dharma.

'"The deed accomplished by Nara in ancient times was great. But Narayana was superior to him because of his many qualities. O king! Therefore, discard your vanity and go to Dhananjaya[82] before a weapon has been affixed to Gandiva, the best of bows. He possesses Kakudika, Shuka, Naka, Akshisamtarjana, Santana, Nartana, Ghora and

Ajyamodaka as the eighth.[83] All men who are pierced by these confront their death, or move around insane, or lose their senses and become unconscious, or go to sleep, or jump around, or vomit, or urinate, or incessantly cry and laugh. Partha's qualities are innumerable and Janardana is superior to him. You have known him as Kunti's son, Dhananjaya. O great king! But know that Nara and Narayana are Arjuna and Keshava, brave warriors and bulls among men. If you know this, do not harbour any suspicions about me. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Be an arya in your resolution and make peace with the Pandavas. O best of the Bharata lineage! If you think it best that there should not be any discord with you, strive for peace and do not set your mind on war. O best of the Kuru lineage! Your lineage is extremely revered on earth. O fortunate one! Let it continue to be that way. Think about what is best for you."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Having heard the words of Jamadagni's son, the illustrious rishi Kanva addressed these words to Duryodhana, in the midst of the assembly of the Kurus. "Brahma, the grandfather of the world, is eternal and without decay. The illustrious rishis Nara and Narayana are like that. Among all the Adityas, Vishnu alone is eternal, without birth, without end and the eternal lord and god. The others—the moon, the sun, the earth, the water, the wind, the fire, the sky, the planet and the stars—are subject to death. When there is the final dissolution of the universe, all of them give up the three worlds and are created again and again. There are others who die in an instant—men, animals, birds and those which are born in inferior species,[84] inhabiting the world of the living. Having enjoyed their great prosperity, kings are destroyed by age. They confront death and enjoy their good deeds and bad deeds. Therefore, you should have peace with Dharma's son. Let the Pandavas and the Kurus rule the earth. O Suyodhana! You should not think that you are strong. O bull among men! It is the strong who decide that others are strong. O Kourava! Among those who are strong, it is not strength alone that makes them strong. All the Pandavas are strong because of the valour of the gods. In this context, an ancient story is told about Matali, when he searched for a suitor to whom he could give his daughter away. The lord of the three worlds[85] has a charioteer named Matali. A single daughter was born in his lineage. She was famous in the worlds because of her beauty. She was as beautiful as a goddess and was famous by the name of Gunakeshi. She surpassed all other women in her beauty and form. O king! Knowing that the time had arrived, together with his wife, Matali decided to give her away and worried, thought about the matter. 'In families of men who are weighty, virtuous, prosperous, famous, gentle and spirited, the growing up of a daughter is deplorable. The mother's family, the father's family and the one into which the daughter is given—these three families are afflicted. I have used the eye of my mind to search in the two worlds of gods and men. But there is no one who satisfies me as a suitor—among gods, daityas,

gandharvas, men and the many rishis. No one is suitable as a groom.’[86] In the night, Matali discussed this with his wife Sudharma and decided to travel to the world of the serpents.[87] ‘As a groom, I do not see anyone in the worlds of gods and men who is equal to Gunakeshi in beauty. But there is certain to be one among the serpents.’[88] Having discussed in this way with Sudharma, he circumambulated her and having inhaled the fragrance of his daughter’s head, entered the earth.”’

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‘Kanva said, “When Matali was travelling along the road, he met maharshi Narada. Because he so desired, he was going to see Varuna. Narada asked, ‘Where are you going? O charioteer! Is it on your own task, or on the instructions of Shatakratu?’ Being questioned by Narada, who was travelling along the same road towards Varuna, Matali told him everything about his own objective. The sage told him, ‘Let us travel together. I have myself descended from heaven to see the lord the waters.[89] I will tell you everything when we see the nether regions of the earth. O Matali! After having searched there, we will approve of a suitable groom.’ Matali and Narada immersed themselves in the nether regions of the earth. The great-souled ones saw the guardian of the world who was the lord of the waters. There, Narada received the homage due to a devarshi and Matali also received honours due to the great Indra. In a happy frame of mind, they told Varuna about their task and having taken his leave, went to the world of the serpents. Narada knew everything about all the beings who dwelt in the nether regions of the earth and described everything in detail to his companion.

‘“Narada said, ‘O son![90] You have now seen Varuna, surrounded by his sons and grandsons. Now behold the regions of the lord of the waters. They are fortunate and prosperous in every way. This immensely wise one is the son of Varuna, the lord of the cows. He is specially distinguished because of his good conduct and purity. This is his beloved son Pushkara, whose eyes are like lotuses. He is beautiful and handsome and has been chosen by Soma’s daughter as her husband. She is famous by the name of Jyotsnakali and she is second only to Shri[91] in her beauty. It has been said that this son of a cow has been made the eldest son of Aditya himself.[92] Behold Varuni’s abode.[93] It is constructed out of gold everywhere. O friend of the lord of the gods! By obtaining this, the gods obtained their divinity. O Matali! You can see all those radiant weapons. They belong to the daityas, who were ousted from the kingdom.[94] Since they are indestructible, they still remain. O Matali! They were conquered by the gods and require great power to be used. O Matali! There are many species of rakshasas and many species of *bhutas*[95] here. They possessed divine weapons that had been constructed by the gods earlier.[96] There is a great fire here, a fire that was created in Varuna’s lake.[97] Theres is also Vishnu’s chakra, surrounded by a fire without smoke. This is the bow Gandiva,[98] created for the destruction of the world. Because it is always protected by the

gods, the bow is known by the name of Gandiva.[99] When the time for action has arrived, it is always certain that it has the strength of one hundred thousand breaths of life. It chastises and brings under its control kings who are allied with the rakshasas. This is the staff first created by Brahma, imbibed with knowledge of the brahman. This is a great weapon for Indras among men and has been pronounced to be that by the great Shakra. The sons of the lord of the waters bear this great weapon. This is the umbrella of the king of the waters[100] and is kept in the room reserved for umbrellas. Like a cloud, it showers cold waters everywhere. The water that showers from this umbrella is as pure as the moon. But it is enveloped in darkness and nothing can be seen. O Matali! There are many extraordinary sights here. But because of the task you have to accomplish, let us quickly leave this spot.'"'

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'"Narada said, 'This city is located in the navel[101] of the world of the serpents. This is known as Patala and is frequented by daityas and the danavas.[102] Living beings and immobile objects are washed down here by the waters and enter, uttering loud noises because they are oppressed by fear. Feeding on the water, the fire known as asura always blazes forth here. But it knows its own restrictions and keeps to its limits. Having killed their enemies, the gods drunk the amrita here and kept the remnants. It is from here that the waxing and waning of the moon can be witnessed.[103] At every conjunction of time, it is from here that the divine Hayashira arises.[104] It is golden in complexion and fills the universe with water. All the objects that have the form of water fall down here. Therefore, this supreme region is famous by the name of Patala.[105] For the welfare of the universe, it is from here that Airavata accepts the water and sprinkles it on the clouds. The great Indra then showers this down as rain.[106] Many kinds of aquatic creatures, in diverse shapes and forms, dwell here. They roam in the water, drinking the water, which is like the rays of the moon. O charioteer! During the day, some inhabitants of the nether regions of Patala are pierced by the rays of the sun and die. They are revived again at night. The moon arises every day, enveloped in its rays. It touches the amrita and revives the beings with this touch. The daityas dwell here, addicted to adharma. Vasava has robbed them of their prosperity and they are tied down here, oppressed by destiny. Maheshvara, the lord of all beings and famous by the name of Bhutapati,[107] performed severe austerities here for the welfare of all beings. The brahmanas who observe the rites of the cow dwell here. They are maharshis devoted to studying and teaching. They have given up their lives and have conquered heaven. A person who lives anywhere, feeds on anything and wears anything, is said to observe the rite of the cow. Airavata, the king of elephants, Vamana, Kumuda and Anjana, supreme among elephants, were born in the lineage of Supratika.[108] Look here and see if there is a groom who appeals to you because of his qualities. O Matali! We will then

go to him and make efforts to choose him as a groom. There is an egg that is placed in these waters. It blazes with its radiance. It has been here since the time when beings were created.[109] It is not shattered. Nor does it move. I have never heard the story about its birth or creation. No one knows about its father or its mother. O Matali! At the time of destruction, it is said that a gigantic fire arises from it and consumes all the three worlds, with their mobile and immobile objects.'"

'Kanva said, "On hearing what Narada had said, Matali replied, 'There is no one here who appeals to me. Let us swiftly go somewhere else.'"'

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'"Narada said, 'This supreme and excellent city is known as Hiranyapura of the daityas and the danavas, who roam around with a hundred different kinds of maya. Maya fashioned it in his mind and Vishvakarma created it with a great deal of effort.[110] It was placed in the nether regions of Patala. Having been granted a boon in ancient times, the brave and greatly energetic danavas lived here, practising a thousand different kinds of maya. Shakra, or Varuna, or Yama, or the lord of riches,[111] or any of the others, could not control them. The asuras known as the Kalakhanjas were created from Vishnu's feet. The Nairritas and Yatudhanas were created from Brahma's altar.[112] They had teeth and terrible forms and were valorous, with the speed of the wind. They were endowed with the prowess of maya. They lived here and protected themselves. The danavas named Nivatakavachas were invincible in battle. You know that even Shakra was incapable of restraining them. O Matali! You yourself, together with your son Gomukha, have repeatedly been shattered by them and also the king of the gods, Shachi's consort, together with his son. O Matali! Behold those mansions, constructed out of gold and silver. They have been designed and constructed with diverse kinds of wonderful artisanship. They have green lapis lazuli, red coral, white coral that is like the sun and radiant diamonds. They shine like the earth, mountains or rocks, and seem to be like the stars. They are as radiant as the sun and like a blazing fire. They have colourful nets of jewels and are tall, standing close to one another. It is impossible to describe their forms, constituents and qualities. They are large and possess all the qualities. Look at the sporting grounds of the daityas and their beds. The vessels and the seats are bejewelled and extremely expensive. Look at the mountains which are like clouds, with currents of water flowing down them and trees that can move around at will and provide blossoms and fruit one desires. O Matali! Is there anyone here who appeals to you as a groom? Or if you so wish, let us go towards some other direction on earth.'"

'Kanva said, "Matali then spoke to the one who had addressed him in this way. 'O devarshi! I do not wish to do anything that causes displeasure to the denizens of heaven. Though the gods and the danavas are brothers, they are always engaged in enmity. I cannot find pleasure in an alliance with the enemy's party. It is better that we should go

somewhere else. I should not look at the danavas. I know this of myself. I wish to give that lotus away.'"'

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'"Narada said, 'This is the world of the Suparnas. They are birds which kill serpents. They are not exhausted in their valour, in travelling, or in bearing loads. O charioteer! This is the lineage that has descended from the six sons of Vinata's son[113]—Sumukha, Sunamna, Sunetra, Suvarchasa, Surupa, the king of the birds, and Subala. There were hundreds and thousands who were born and reared in Vinata's lineage, born in the lineage of the king of the birds. They were born in Kashyapa's lineage and extended it.[114] All of them are endowed with prosperity. All of them are marked by the srivatsa sign.[115] All of them aspire for good fortune and bear strength. They are kshatriyas in their deeds and are ruthless in feeding on serpents. Because they destroy their relatives,[116] they never attain the status of brahmanas. O Matali! Listen. I will recount the names of the foremost ones to you. This lineage is extremely revered because it is favoured by Vishnu. Vishnu is their god and Vishnu is their refuge. Vishnu is always in their hearts. Vishnu is always their objective. There are Suvarnachuda, Nagashi, Daruna, Chandatundaka, Anala, Anila, Vishalaksha, Kundali, Kashyapi, Dhvajavishkamba, Vainateya, Vamana, Vatavega, Dishachakshu, Nimesha, Nimisha, Trivara, Saptavara, Valmiki, Dvipaka, Daityadvipa, Sariddvipa, Sarasa, Padmakesara, Sumukha, Sukhaketu, Chitrabahu, Anagha, Meghakrita, Kumuda, Daksha, Sarpanta, Somabhojana, Gurubhara, Kapota, Suryanetra, Chirantaka, Vishnudhanva, Kumara, Paribarha, Harita, Susvara, Madhuparka, Hemavarna, Malaya, Matarishva, Nishakara and Divakara. I have recounted Garuda's descendants only as examples. They are the foremost ones in fame, deeds and spirit. O Matali! If none of these appeals to you, let us proceed. I will take you to a region where you may find what you are looking for.'"'

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'"Narada said, 'This is the seventh of the nether regions of earth, named Rasatala.[117] Surabhi, the mother of all cows, who was created from amrita, dwells there. She is always overflowing with milk and is the source of all the essences of earth. That single supreme essence is distilled from the core of the six essences.[118] In ancient times, this unblemished one arose from the grandfather's[119] mouth, when he was satisfied with amrita and regurgitated its essence. The flow of her milk descended on the surface of the earth and created a lake that is known as the sacred and extremely supreme ocean of milk. It is surrounded by blossoming foam in every direction. The supreme sages who drink foam dwell there. O Matali! They are known as the drinkers of foam because they survive on foam. They are engaged in terrible austerities and the gods are terrified of them. O Matali! From her, a cow was born for each of the directions. They live there, as

those who protect those directions and it is said that they support the directions. Surabhi's calf named Surupa sustains the eastern direction. Varuna's western direction is sustained by Subhadra. O Matali! She is great in her influence and has the form of the universe. The calf named Sarvakamadugha sustains the northern direction. O Matali! She is devoted to dharma and is named after Ilavila's son.[120] The gods and the asuras got together and churned the waters of the ocean, which was mixed with their milk, using Mandara as a churning rod. O Matali! They obtained the liquor known as Varuni, Lakshmi, amrita, Uchchaihshrava, the king of the horses, and Koustubha, jewel among all gems. Surabhi provides her milk as *sudha* for those who drink sudha, as *svadha* for those who drink svadha and as amrita for those who drink amrita.[121] In ancient times, a song was sung by the residents of Rasatala. The learned ones of this world heard this in ancient times and still sing it. "Dwelling in Rasatala brings greater happiness than in the world of the serpents, or in heaven, or in the vimanas of the gods."'"'

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'"Narada said, 'This city is named Bhogavati and is ruled over by Vasuki. It is as beautiful as Amaravati, the beautiful city of the king of the gods. The naga Shesha is stationed here. Because of his austerities, foremost in the worlds, and his power, he always holds up the earth. In size, he is as large as Mount Shveta and he is adorned in many kinds of ornaments. He is immensely strong. He has a thousand[122] on his head and a flaming tongue. Adorned in many kinds of ornaments, the nagas who are Surasa's sons dwell here. They have many different kinds of forms and live here happily. They are marked with the signs of jewels, svastikas, chakras and *kamandalu*s. They are many thousands in number. All of them are strong and naturally terrible. Some have one thousand heads. Others have five hundred faces. Some have one hundred heads. Others have three heads. Some have three heads. Others have seven faces. They have strong coils and gigantic forms, with the coils resembling mountains. In a single lineage, there are many thousand, million and crore of nagas. Listen to the most famous ones. There are Vasuki, Takshaka, Karkotaka, Dhananjaya, Kaliya, Nahusha, Kambala, Ashvatara, Bahyakunda, Maninaga, Apurana, Khaga, Vamana, Elapatra, Kukura, Kukuna, Aryaka, Nandaka, Kalasha, Potaka, Kailasaka, Pinjaraka, the naga Airavata, Sumanomukha, Dadhimukha, Shankha, Nanda, Upanandaka, Apta, Kotanaka, Shikhi, Nishthurika, Tittiri, Hastibhadra, Kumuda, Malyapindaka, the two Padmas, Pundarika, Pushpa, Mudgaraparnaka, Karavira, Pitharaka, Samvritta, Vritta, Pindara, Bilvapatra, Mushikada, Shirishaka, Dilipa, Shankhashirsa, Jyotishka, Aparajita, Kouravya, Dhritarashtra, Kumara, Kushaka, Viraja, Dharana, Subahu, Mukhara, Jaya, Badhira, Andha, Vikunda, Virasa and Surasa. These and many others are known as Kashyapa's descendants.[123] O Matali! See if there is anyone here who appeals to you as a groom.'"

'Kanva said, "Matali was listening attentively and continuously glancing at one

particular one. He seemed to be delighted and asked Narada, 'There is this one who is standing before the Kouravya Aryaka. He is radiant and handsome. Whose lineage is he descended from? Who are his father and mother? From what serpent is he descended? Of what great lineage is he the flag-bearer? He has energy, fortitude, beauty and age. My mind finds delight in him. O devarshi! He will be a worthy husband for Gunakeshi.' On seeing that Matali was delighted at having seen Sumukha, he[124] then told him about his greatness, birth and deeds. 'His name is Sumukha and he is a king of the nagas. He has been born in Airavata's lineage. He is the grandson of Aryaka on the father's side and of Vamana on the mother's. O Matali! His father is the naga named Chikura, who has recently been reduced to the five elements by Vinata's son.'[125] Delighted, Matali then addressed Narada in these words. 'O father![126] This supreme among serpents pleases me as a son-in-law. I am delighted with him and let us make swift endeavours. O sage! I wish to bestow my beloved daughter on this serpent.'"'

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'"Narada said, 'This is Shakra's beloved well-wisher and charioteer and his name is Matali. He is pure and of good conduct and possesses all the qualities. He is energetic, valiant and strong. Apart from being a charioteer, he is Shakra's friend and adviser. In battle after battle, there has been little difference in power between him and Vasava. He drives the supreme chariot Jaitra, to which one thousand bay horses are yoked. Through his strength of mind, he controls them in battles between the gods and the asuras. Vasava uses his strength to defeat others only after he has vanquished them with his horses. The destroyer of Bala strikes with his weapons only after he[127] has struck first. He has a daughter with beautiful thighs. She is unsurpassed on earth in beauty. She is truthful and of good conduct and has all the qualities. She is known by the name of Gunakeshi. O one with the radiance of an immortal![128] He has been searching in the three worlds. Your grandson Sumukha appeals to him as a husband for his daughter. O Aryaka! O supreme among serpents! If this appeals to you, without any delay, make arrangements for accepting this maiden. Like Lakshmi in the lineage of Vishnu, like Svaha in the lineage of the fire, may the slender-waisted Gunakeshi be like that in your lineage.[129] Therefore, accept Gunakeshi for the sake of your grandson. She is his equal in beauty, like Shachi is the equal of Vasava. Though he doesn't have a father, we choose him as a groom because of his qualities and out of great reverence for you and Airavata. Sumukha possesses the qualities of conduct, purity, self-control and so on. Matali has come to you in person, ready to bestow his daughter. It is proper that you should also honour him.'"

'Kanva said, "Aryaka was both happy and miserable. He was happy because of his grandson, but sad because his son was dead. He told Narada, 'O devarshi! Do not think that I do not approve of your words. Who will not desire an alliance with Shakra's

friend? O great sage! But I am hesitant on account of a weakness. O father![130] My immensely radiant son, who gave him his body, has been devoured by Vinata's son and we are miserable on that account. O lord! When Vinata's son went away, he said, "I will devour Sumukha after a month." This will certainly happen, because I know his determination. Therefore, my delight has been destroyed because of the words of Suparna.' Matali then told him, 'My mind has been made up. I have decided that Sumukha, born from your son, will be my son-in-law. This serpent must come with me and Narada and go and see Vasava, the lord of the three worlds and the lord of the gods. I will endeavour to find out how much of his lifespan remains. O supreme one! I will attempt to counter Suparna. Let Sumukha come with me to the lord of the gods, for the accomplishment of this task. O serpent! May you be fortunate.' Then all of those immensely energetic ones went to see the immensely radiant king of the gods, Shakra, where he was seated, together with Sumukha. The illustrious four-armed Vishnu also happened to be there. Narada related everything about Matali. Vishnu then told Purana, the lord of the world, 'O Vasava! Give him amrita and make him an equal of the immortals. Through your wish, let Matali, Narada and Sumukha obtain their cherished desires.' Thinking about the valour of Vinata's son, Purandara told Vishnu, 'You should grant it.' Vishnu replied, 'You are the lord of all the worlds and of everything that is mobile and immobile. O lord! Who will dare to take back what you have given?' Thus did Shakra grant the serpent a supreme lifespan. But the destroyer of Bala and Vritra did not give him amrita. On obtaining the boon, Sumukha's face became extremely radiant. He obtained a wife. And according to his desires, returned home. Having succeeded in their objective, Narada and Aryaka were delighted, and after honouring the greatly radiant king of the gods, departed."'

'Kanva said, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The immensely strong Garuda heard the account about how Shakra had granted the serpent a long life. Suparna was extremely enraged and went to Vasava, stopping the three worlds with the great wind created by his wings.

'"Garuda said, 'O illustrious one! When I was hungry, you gave me a boon of your own accord.[131] Why are you ignoring that and going back on it? The creator, the lord of all beings, has ordained my food, ever since all beings have been created. What is the reason for your going against that? I have chosen this great naga for my sustenance and have chosen the time. O god! I have to sustain my large offspring through him. O king of the gods! Now that this decision has been frustrated, I cannot cause violence to another, unlike you, sporting according to your wishes and your whims. Therefore, I will have to give up my life now, together with my relatives and the servants in my house. O Vasava! I hope you are happy. O slayer of Bala and Vritra! But this is certainly what I deserve. When I was a lord of the three worlds, I chose to become the servant of another one.[132] As long as you are the lord of the gods, Vishnu is not responsible for this. O Vasava! The kingship of the three worlds and the kingdom is vested in you for eternity. I also have Daksha's daughter as my mother and Kashyapa as my father.[133] With ease, I can also bear the burden of the worlds. I am also unassailable by all beings and I also possess great strength. In the war with the daityas, extremely great deeds have also been performed by me. Diti's sons have also been killed by me [134]—Shrutashri, Shrutasena, Vivasvan, Rochanamukha, Prasabha and Kalakaksha. I make efforts to station myself on your younger brother's[135] standard and serve and bear him. Is that the reason you disrespect me? Who else is capable of bearing that load? Who else is stronger than I am? Though I am distinguished in this way, yet I bear him and his relatives. Since you have restrained me from my food, I have been shown disrespect by you and have also lost his.[136] O Vasava! Among all those who have been born from Aditi and possess strength and valour, you are certainly the one who is strongest among them all. But without any exhaustion, I can bear you on a single one of my feathers. O father![137] Therefore, reflect on who is the stronger one.'"

'Kanva said, "When the one who wields the wheel of the chariot[138] heard these extremely threatening words of the bird, he spoke to Tarkshya,[139] desiring to trouble the one who cannot be troubled. 'O Garuda! You think yourself to be strong, but you are extremely weak. O one who has been born from an egg! In our presence, you should not praise yourself in this way. Even when they are together, the three worlds are incapable of bearing my body. I myself bear myself and bear you too. To establish the truth of your words, bear my right arm alone. If you can bear it, your self-praise will be established to be true.' Then the illustrious one placed his[140] arm on his[141] shoulder and he fell down oppressed by that load, unconscious and bereft of his senses. The entire

weight of the earth, together with its mountains, was as much as a single arm of his body. Achyuta, supreme among strong ones, did not press down with all his strength. He did not want to rob him of his life. The bird was bereft of its wings. His body was spread out. He was unconscious. He was bereft of his senses. Oppressed by that great burden, he began to shed his feathers. The bird who was Vinata's son then bowed his head before Vishnu. He was unconscious and bereft of his senses. In misery, he spoke these words. 'O illustrious one! You have extended a well-formed arm that is like the essence of the worlds and have pressed me down on the face of the earth. O god! You should forgive me. I am confused and am a bird with limited intelligence. Dwelling on your standard, I was consumed by the fire of my strength. O god! O lord! I did not know of your supreme strength. That is the reason I thought myself to possess a valour that was unmatched by anyone else.' The illustrious one was then pleased with Garuda and affectionately told him that he should not act in this way again. O Gandhari's son! O son! Like that, you are alive only as long as you do not attack the sons of Pandu in battle. Bhima, Vayu's extremely strong son, is foremost among the wielders of weapons. Dhananjaya is Indra's son. Who will they not kill in battle? Vishnu, Vayu, Shakra, Dharma and the two Ashvins are gods.[142] You are incapable of even looking at them. O son of a king! Therefore, end the hostilities and seek peace. With Vasudeva as a sanctuary, you should protect your lineage. The immensely ascetic Narada has witnessed all this and Vishnu's greatness with his own eyes. He is the wielder of the chakra and the club."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Duryodhana had listened to all this with sighs and frowns on his face. He glanced towards Radheya then and laughed out aloud. Ignoring the words of the rishi Kanva, the evil-minded one slapped his thigh, which was like the trunk on an elephant, and said, "I will act as the creator has created me, according to what is in the future and my destiny. O maharshi! What will this pointless conversation achieve?"'

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Janamejaya said, 'He[143] has been prone to evil from his birth, coveting the riches of others and confounded by avarice. He acts in ways that are not like those of an arya and is determined to bring about his own death. He is the cause of grief to his kin and relatives and increases their misery. He causes difficulties for his well-wishers and increases the delight of his enemies. Why did his relatives and well-wishers not restrain him from this deviant path? Out of friendship and affection, why did the illustrious one[144] and the grandfather not stop him?'

Vaishampayana said, 'The illustrious one spoke appropriate words and so did Bhishma. Narada also said many things. Listen to them.

'Narada said, "Rare is a well-wisher who listens. Rare is a well-wisher who offers beneficial advice. Where there is a well-wisher, there is no friend.[145] O descendant of the Kuru lineage! I think that your well-wishers should be heard. One should not stick to

obstinacy. Stubbornness is extremely terrible. In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about how obstinacy led to Galava's defeat. In ancient times, Dharma sought to test Vishvamitra's austerities. He went to him himself, adopting the form of the illustrious rishi Vasishtha. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O king! Having adopted the form of one of the saptarshis, he went to Koushika's[146] hermitage, as if he was hungry and wished to satisfy his hunger. With reverence, Vishvamitra cooked some *charu*.[147] Because of the extreme care he took on this, he could not attend to him in other ways. But without waiting for this food, he[148] ate what had been offered by other ascetics. Having brought the warm food, Vishvamitra came to him. The illustrious one said, 'I have already eaten. Stay here.' And departed. O king! The immensely radiant Vishvamitra stood there. Because of his devotion, he grasped the food with his two hands and placing it on his head, stood nearby. He stood immobile like a pillar, subsisting only on air. At that time, the sage Galava made efforts to take care of him. Out of respect, reverence and affection, he did what brought him[149] pleasure. After one hundred years had passed, Dharma appeared before Koushika in Vasishtha's disguise and wished to eat. He saw the intelligent maharshi Vishvamitra stationed there in devotion, subsisting on air and bearing the food on his head. Dharma accepted it and it was still warm and fresh. Having eaten, he said, 'O brahmana rishi! I am pleased.' Then the sage left. Because of Dharma's words, Vishvamitra was delighted and giving up the state of a kshatriya, assumed the state of a brahmana. Vishvamitra was pleased at the service and devotion of his disciple, the ascetic Galava, and said, 'O son! O Galava! You have my permission to go wherever you desire.' Having been thus addressed, Galava, supreme among sages was pleased. He told the immensely radiant Vishvamitra in gentle words, 'What dakshina[150] will I give you for having performed the task of my preceptor? Man's rites only succeed when dakshina has been given. When dakshina has been paid, virtuous ones are freed from their debts. Dakshina is the fruit of a sacrifice, obtained in heaven, and is therefore said to constitute peace. O illustrious one! Tell me. What will I give my preceptor?' The illustrious Vishvamitra knew that he had already been honoured by his service and repeatedly asked him[151] to go away. But despite Vishvamitra repeatedly asking him to leave, Galava kept repeatedly asking, 'What will I give?' The ascetic Vishamitra was slightly enraged at Galava's great obstinacy and told him, 'Give me eight hundred horses that are as white as the rays of the moon and possess a single black ear each. O Galava! Go now and do not delay.'"'

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'Narada said, "When Galava was thus addressed by the intelligent Vishvamitra, he could not sleep, sit or eat. His body became skeletal and green, because he was overcome by worry and misery. He began to think excessively and was consumed by his exasperation. 'Where can I get prosperous friends? Where can I obtain riches and treasure? Where can

I get eight hundred horses that are as white as the rays of the moon? How can I devote myself to eating? How can I devote myself to happiness? Though I am alive, I am not devoted to it. What is the point of this devastated life? I will go to the other side of the ocean, or to the other side of the earth, and give up my life. What is the point of remaining alive? I am without riches. I am unsuccessful. I have given up different kinds of fruits. I am bearing the burden of a debt. How can such a person hope for happiness? If one has enjoyed the riches of one's well-wishers, offered as a mark of affection, and is unable to repay the favour, death is superior to remaining alive. Having promised to do something, if one does not accomplish that task, one is tormented with false words and all the fruits of sacrifices are destroyed. There is no beauty in a liar. A liar does not obtain offspring. A liar obtains no lordships. How can he find an auspicious end? How can there be fame for an ungrateful person, or a proper station, or happiness? An ungrateful person is disrespected. There is no salvation for an ungrateful one. There is no life for one without riches. Will such a wicked person sustain himself through crookedness? Unable to return a favour, such a wicked person is certainly destroyed. I am such a wicked person. I am ungrateful. I am wretched. I am a liar. Having succeeded in studying with my preceptor, I am unable to accomplish what he has asked me to do. After having undertaken supreme endeavours, I will free myself of this life. Never before have I asked for anything from the gods. All the thirty gods revere me because of my sacrifices. I will go to Vishnu, the lord of the three worlds and the god who is foremost among the gods. Krishna is the refuge and he is the supreme refuge for those who seek it. He pervades all the gods and the asuras and all the comforts are established in him. I bow down, wishing to see that undecaying and great yogi.'

'"When he said this, his friend Garuda, Vinata's son, appeared before him. He was delighted and to undertake a kind act, said, 'I think that you are my well-wisher. It is my view that a well-wisher must help, to the best of capacity, his well-wisher obtain the object that he desires. O brahmana! I possess the means. O brahmana! I have spoken earlier to Vasava's younger brother[152] on your behalf and he has acceded to my wishes. Let us happily go to the region that is beyond this earth. O Galava! Let us swiftly go.'"'

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'"Suparna said, 'O Galava! I have received instructions from the god who is the source of all knowledge. Tell me. Towards which direction do you wish to go first—east, south, the western direction or the north? O foremost among brahmanas! O Galava! Where will I go? The sun rises from the east and illuminates all the worlds. When it is dawn, the austerities of the Sadhyas take place there. Intelligence was first born in the east and from there, permeated the entire universe. Dharma's two eyes are established there.[153] Offerings are rendered through the mouth there and the oblations spread to all the directions. O foremost among brahmanas! This is the gate through which the day begins

its journey. It is in the east that Daksha's women[154] gave birth to subjects. It is the direction where Kashyapa's offspring prospered. This is the root of the prosperity of the gods and Shakra was instated in the kingdom of the gods there. O brahmana rishi! Even the gods performed austerities there. O brahmana! It is because of these reasons that this direction is known as *purva*. In earlier times, this was the first region to be covered by the gods.[155] All the ancient ones gaze upon the eastern direction. One who craves happiness, should perform all the divine tasks in the eastern direction. The illustrious one who gives birth to the worlds,[156] first chanted the Vedas there. To those who know about the brahman, the sun god first recited the *savitri* here.[157] O supreme among brahmanas! The sun god bestowed the hymns of the Yajur Veda here. It was here that those gods, who had obtained the required boon, earlier drank soma at sacrifices. The flame that bears oblations was satisfied here through objects that have the same origin as itself.[158] It is here that Varuna descended to Patala and obtained his prosperity. O bull among brahmanas! It is here that the ancient Vasishtha's birth, rise to eminence and death took place. The first sound of "Om" was created here, one thousand times. The sages who drink soma drank it near the altar here. It is here that Shakra kills many boars and forest-dwelling beasts, as shares in the sacrifice for minor gods. The sun rises here and in his rage, kills all ungrateful men and asuras. This is the gate to the three worlds and to heaven and happiness. This is the eastern quarter. If you so wish, let us go there. My task is to please the one[159] whose instructions I obey. O Galava! Tell me, and I will go. Or listen to me about another direction.'"

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'"Suparna said, 'In ancient times, Vivasvat performed a *shrouta*[160] sacrifice here. Because he offered dakshina to his preceptor, this direction is known as dakshina.[161] It is there that *pitripaksha* of the three worlds is established.[162] O brahmana! It is said that the gods who sustain themselves on warm oblations also dwell here.[163] The Vishvadevas also live here, together with the ancestors. They are worshipped through sacrifices in this world and are given equal shares. O brahmana! This is known as Dharma's second gate. Time is computed here through *trutis* and *lavas*.[164] The devarshis always dwell here, as do those who dwell in the world of the ancestors. All the rajarshis, having transcended pain, live here. Dharma, truth and karma are heard of here. O foremost among brahmanas! Immersed in one's karma, one goes there. O foremost among brahmanas! This is the direction that everyone must traverse.[165] But confounded by ignorance, they do not obtain happiness. O bull among brahmanas! There are thousands of Nairritas there. They have been created to obstruct those who have not perfected their souls. O brahmana! There, in the groves of Mandara, dwell brahmana rishis and gandharvas sing songs that steal the heart and the mind. Raivata heard the chants of the Sama Veda being sung here.[166] He gave up his wife, his advisers and his kingdom and left for the

forest. O brahmana! Savarni and Yavakrita's son[167] established limits here and the sun does not transgress them. The great-souled Poulastya Ravana, the king of the rakshasas, performed terrible austerities here and obtained immortality from the gods as a boon.[168] Because of his conduct, Vritra became Shakra's enemy here. All living beings are reduced to the five elements here. O Galava! Men who are the performers of evil deeds are cooked here. The river Vaitarani is here and is surrounded by people who cannot cross it.[169] After having faced extreme happiness, men confront extreme unhappiness here. On returning here,[170] the sun releases tasty water. Having reached the solstice, with the nakshatra Dhanishtha,[171] it again begins to release the cold. O Galava! In earlier times, I was oppressed by hunger here and began to think about satisfying it. I obtained a large elephant and a large tortoise that were fighting with each other.[172] The great rishi Shakradhanu was born here from the sun. He is the one who is known as the divine Kapila, the one who consumed Sagara's sons.[173] Here the brahmanas named the Shivas became learned in the Vedas and obtained success. After having studied all the Vedas, they attained Yama's abode. This is the city named Bhogavati, ruled over by Vasuki, the serpent Takshaka and Airavata. At the time of death, one encounters a great darkness here. It cannot be penetrated by the sun or the black-trailed fire itself. O Galava! You will yourself travel along this path of grief. Tell me if you wish to go.[174] Otherwise, hear about the west.'"'

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'"Suparna said, 'This is the beloved region of King Varuna, the lord of the cows. This kingdom of the waters has always been the source of his powers. At the end of the day, the sun himself sheds his rays here. O supreme among brahmanas! That is the reason this direction is known as the last.[175] The illustrious and divine Kashyapa instated Varuna here, to rule over the kingdom of the waters and aquatic creatures. Having drunk the six rasas of Varuna here, the moon becomes young at the beginning of shuklapaksha and dispels darkness. Vayu vanquished the daityas here and subsequently fettered them. O brahmana! They sleep and sigh here, oppressed by the great nagas. The mountain named Asta[176] accepts the beloved sun here and from this, the western twilight spreads. At the end of the day, night and sleep spread from here, seeming to steal away half the lives of living beings. It was here that Shakra aborted the goddess Diti when she was asleep and the masses of Maruts were born from that.[177] Here, the root of the Himalayas extends as far as the eternal Mandara. Even if one travels for one thousand years, one does not reach the end. Having reached the shores of the golden ocean, near the golden mountain, Surabhi yields milk here. Here, in the midst of the ocean, can be seen the torso of Svarbhanu.[178] Resembling the sun, he tries to kill the sun and the moon. The loud chanting by Suvarnashira can be heard here. His body hair is golden and he is invisible and immeasurable. On the instructions of the sun,

Harimedha's daughter Dhvajavati was stationed in the sky here and was asked to remain there.[179] O Galava! During the day and during the night, the wind, the fire, the water and the sky are freed from any unhappiness that their touch causes. From this point on, the sun travels in a diagonal direction[180] and all the nakshatras enter the sun's circle. Together with the sun, they circle for twenty-eight nights. Having emerged again from the sun, they have conjunctions with the moon. This is the eternal source of the rivers and the ocean is created from them. The waters of the three worlds are here and this is Varuna's abode. This is the residence of Ananta, the king of the serpents. This is the supreme residence of Vishnu, who is without a beginning and without an end. This is also the abode of the wind, a friend of the fire. This is the abode of maharshi Kashyapa, the son of Maricha. Thus, in my description of the directions, I have recounted the western path. O Galava! O supreme among brahmanas! Tell me the direction in which you wish to go.'"'

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'"Suparna said, 'Since one is absolved from sins and obtains supreme welfare, learned ones therefore refer to it as the northern direction.[181] O Galava! The road to the north is golden and is said to be between the western and eastern directions. O bull among brahmanas! The north is the supreme of directions. People who are not tranquil, have not controlled their souls and are not devoted to dharma cannot dwell there. Krishna Narayana and Jishnu, supreme among men, live there in the hermitage of Badari, as does the eternal Brahma. Here, on the slopes of the Himalayas, Maheshvara always resides. The moon was instated as the king of the brahmanas here. O one who is learned about the brahman! When Ganga descended from the sky, Mahadeva held her here and gave her to the world of men. The goddess[182] performed austerities here to obtain Maheshvara. Desire, anger, mountains and Uma were created here. O Galava! The lord of riches[183] was instated here on Kailasa as the lord of the rakshasas, the yakshas and the gandharvas. This is the beautiful Chaitraratha and the hermitage of the Vaikhanasas.[184] O bull among brahmanas! Mandakini and Mandara are here. There is the forest of Sougandhika, guarded by the Nairittas. There are meadows and groves of plantains and the Santanaka mountains. The Siddhas are here, always controlled. O Galava! They can roam around as they wish in excellent vimanas and can enjoy them as they wish. The seven rishis are here and the goddess Arundhati.[185] This is said to be the place of Svati, because it rises here.[186] When a sacrifice was performed, the grandfather determined that this would be Dhruva's[187] place. The stars, and the moon and the sun, always circle around him. O supreme among brahmanas! The great-souled and truthful sages named Dhama protect the gate of Gayantika here. Their origins, shapes, or the strength of their austerities, are not known. O Galava! They have created one thousand orbits that can be enjoyed as one desires. Whenever a man penetrates beyond this, he

vanishes. O bull among brahmanas! No one has ever gone beyond this, except the god Narayana and the undecaying Nara Jishnu. This is the region of Ilavila's son,[188] known as Kailasa. The ten apsaras known as Vidyutprabhas were born here. When Vishnu strode the three worlds, he placed a foot in the spot known as Vishnupada.[189] O brahmana! This is the northern direction. O supreme among brahmanas! O brahmana rishi! King Marutta performed a sacrifice here, at Ushirabija, and there is a golden pond there. Jimuta is a great-souled brahmana rishi and the sacred and clear pond of the Himalayas, full of lotuses, waits upon him in person there. Having donated all those great riches to brahmanas, the maharshi left for the forest known as Jimutavana. O bull among the brahmanas! O Galava! The guardians of the directions always gather here in the morning and in the evening, loudly wishing to know who desires what. O foremost among brahmanas! This is the northern region, foremost in its qualities.[190] It is known as the north because it is foremost in all deeds. O son![191] I have now described the directions to you in detail. I have described all four in due order. Which one do you wish to go to? O foremost among brahmanas! O brahmana! I am ready to show you all the directions and the entire earth. O brahmana! Climb up on me.'"'

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'"Galava said, 'O Garutman![192] O enemy of the kings of serpents! O Suparna! O Vinata's son! O Tarkshya! Take me to the east, where Dharma's two eyes are stationed. Take me to the eastern direction, the one you have described first. You have said that the gods are present there. You have truly said that dharma and truth reside there. I wish to meet all those gods. O Aruna's younger brother! I wish to see those gods.'"

'Narada said, "Then Vinata's son told the brahmana, 'Mount on me,' and the sage Galava climbed onto Garuda.

'"Galava said, 'O destroyer of serpents! As you travel, your beauty can be seen, like the sun, the one who brings light in a thousand rays, in the forenoon. O bird! As you travel, I can see how the trees are uprooted by the wind created by your wings and leave a trail behind. O traveller in the sky! The storm created by your winds seems to drag up the earth, with its oceans, mountains, forests and groves. Because of the great force created by the wind of your wings, the water seems to be raised up into the sky, with its fish, serpents and crocodiles. I can see fish, whale and *timingilas*,[193] similar in their forms, churned up and also serpents, similar in forms to men. I have been rendered deaf because of the roar of the great ocean. I can hear nothing. I can see nothing. I do not even know why I am here. Please travel slowly. Remember that you may kill a brahmana. O father![194] O bird! The sun cannot be seen, or the directions, or the sky. I can only see darkness. I cannot discern your body. O one born from an egg! I can only see your two eyes, glistening like jewels. I cannot see your body, nor my own. At every step, I see fire rising out of the water. Swiftly extinguish it and again restore tranquillity

to my eyes. O Vinata's son! You have been travelling for a long time. Stop now. O destroyer of serpents! There is no reason for me to go. O one who travels at great speed! Refrain, because I cannot bear your speed. I have promised my preceptor eight hundred horses that are as white as the rays of the moon, with a single black ear each. O one born from an egg! But I see no means of keeping that pledge. Therefore, the only path that I can see is to give up my own life. I possess no riches. I do not have wealthy well-wishers. Even with great riches, this objective is incapable of being attained.'"

'Narada said, "Galava spoke many miserable words in this way. But Vinata's son laughed and continued to travel. He replied, 'O brahmana rishi! If you wish to kill yourself, you cannot be very wise. Death cannot be artificially chosen. Death is determined by the supreme god. Why did you not tell me this earlier? There is great ease with which you will accomplish your objective. On the breast of the ocean, there is this mountain named Rishabha. O Galava! Rest here and having eaten, we will return.'"'

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'Narada said, "The brahmana and the bird descended on the summit of Rishabha. They saw the brahmana lady Shandili practising austerities there. After Suparna had greeted her and Galava had worshipped her, she welcomed them and they seated themselves on grass that had been spread out. They quickly ate the cooked food she offered, consecrated with mantras. Having lost their senses because of this, they slept on the ground. After some time, Suparna woke up and wished to leave. The traveller in the sky saw that his wings had fallen off. The bird became like a lump of flesh, with only a mouth and feet. On seeing him, Galava was distressed and asked, 'How have you come to this state? What is the cause? How long will we have to remain here? Have we thought of something that is evil and transgressed dharma? Surely this cannot have been the result of a small transgression on your part.' Suparna told the brahmana, 'O brahmana! I did entertain the thought of taking this Siddha to where Prajapati, the god Mahadeva, the eternal Vishnu, Dharma and sacrifices reside, so that she might live there also. O illustrious goddess![195] For my own good, I bow down before you. I harboured this thought in my mind and have certainly come to grief because of this. But it was only out of great respect for you that I wished to do something like this. Whether it was a good deed, or whether it was a bad deed, you should forgive me because of your greatness.' Thus spoken to, she was placated.

'"She told the king of the birds and the bull among the brahmanas, 'O Suparna! Do not be afraid. You will possess beautiful wings again. O son! I have been slighted by you and I do not tolerate slights. Evil ones who slight me will be dislodged from the superior worlds. I am devoid of any inauspicious marks. I am unblemished in every way. I have achieved supreme success. Through good conduct, one obtains dharma. Through good conduct, one obtains riches. Through good conduct, one obtains prosperity. Through

good conduct, one destroys inauspicious portents. O lord of the birds! May you have a long life. Go wherever you wish. Never censure a woman, even if she deserves to be censured. You will possess strength and valour, as you did earlier.' His wings grew up again and they were stronger than before. Having taken Shandili's leave, he left in the direction from where he had come. But they did not come across horses of that description.

'"Vishvamitra was stationed along that road and saw Galava. The most eloquent of speakers told him in the presence of Vinata's son, 'O brahmana! You have promised me of your own volition. The time has come to meet that pledge. Do what you think is proper. Since I have waited this long, I will wait for a little more. O brahmana! Determine a path to accomplish success.' Galava was extremely distressed and Suparna told him, 'I have myself heard what Vishvamitra has told you. O best of brahmanas! O Galava! Let us go and consult together. Until you have given your preceptor what you have promised in entirety, you cannot even sit down.'"'

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'Narada said, "Galava was distressed. Suparna, supreme among those who have wings, told him, 'Gold is created in the ground and is purified by fire. It is because of this that it is known as *hiranya*.[196] Since it supports and sustains the prosperity of the three worlds, it is always known as dhana.[197] Shukra is the lord of riches. When the two constellations of Proshthapada[198] are in the ascendance, Shukra grants men the riches that they have earned. Those riches are guarded by Aja Ekapada,[199] Ahi Budhnya[200] and the lord of riches. O bull among brahmanas! They cannot be obtained if they are meant to be unobtainable. Without riches, you are incapable of obtaining the horses. Ask a king for riches, one who has been born in a lineage of rajarshis. Such a king will be able to satisfy us, without oppressing his subjects. There is a king who has been born in the lunar dynasty. He is my friend. Let us approach him. He possesses a great deal of riches on earth. He is a rajarshi named Yayati, the son of Nahusha, and truth is his valour. When he is asked by you and requested by me, he will himself give it. He possessed wealth that was as great as that of the lord of riches. But by giving up some of those riches, the learned one cleansed himself.' While they were conversing and thinking in this fashion, they reached King Yayati in Pratishthana.

'"After accepting the honours, the argha and the excellent food, Vinata's son was subsequently asked about the reason for their arrival. 'O son of Nahusha! This is my friend Galava. He is an ocean of austerities. O king! He has been Vishvamitra's pupil for ten thousand years. When he was given permission to leave, this illustrious brahmana wished to return the favour and asked his preceptor about what should be given as a dakshina. When he kept asking, his teacher was enraged and asked him to give, though he knew that his riches were limited. "Give me eight hundred pure-born horses that are

as white as the rays of the moon and possess one black ear each. O Galava! If you so desire, give this to your preceptor as a gift." This is what Vishvamitra, the store of austerities, told him in anger. It is for this reason that this bull among brahmanas is tormented by a great grief. He is incapable of returning the favour and has sought refuge with you. O tiger among men! When he has accepted alms from you, he will be free from his miseries. He will be freed from the debt to his preceptor and will practise great austerities. He will give you a share of those austerities. You are full of a rajarshi's austerities, but you will be filled even more. O lord of men! O lord of the earth! Those who give away a horse obtain as many worlds as there are body hairs on a horse. He is the right vessel to receive and you are the right person to give. This will be like milk sprinkled into a conch shell.'"'

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'Narada said, "On hearing Suparna's supreme words, the king thought repeatedly and at last made up his mind. The lord who had performed one thousand sacrifices was generous and was the lord of gifts. Yayati, the king of all the Vatsas and the Kashis, spoke these words. On seeing his beloved friend Tarkshya and Galava, bull among the brahmanas, an example of austerities, and considering that this act of giving alms was praiseworthy and would bring renown to himself, he thought, 'These two have come to me, ignoring all the other kings of the solar dynasty.' He said, 'My birth has become successful today. O Tarkshya! O unblemished one! My country has been saved by you today. O friend! But I wish to tell you that I am no longer as wealthy as you knew me to be earlier. I don't possess that kind of riches. O friend! My wealth is lesser now. O traveller in the sky! But at the same time, I cannot render your arrival here unsuccessful. Nor do I dare to frustrate the desires of this brahmana rishi. I will give him something that will make his endeavour successful. If one arrives and is frustrated in one's wishes, one burns down the lineage. O son of Vinata! It is said that there is nothing more evil in the world of the living than saying, "I have nothing." This destroys and frustrates the hopes of a man who has arrived for something. A man who is thus unsuccessful causes damage to the sons and grandsons.[201] This daughter of mine will establish four lineages. She is as beautiful as a daughter of the gods and follows every kind of dharma. O Galava! Because of her beauty, this maiden has always been solicited by gods, men and asuras. Therefore, accept my daughter. Kings will certainly give their kingdoms for her as a bride price, not to speak of eight hundred horses with black ears. Accept Madhavi, this daughter of mine. O lord! The only boon that I ask for is that I should have grandsons through my daughter.' Having accepted the maiden, Galava left with the bird. Saying, 'Let us look again,' he left with the maiden. The bird said, 'The path for obtaining the horses has now been obtained.' Having said this, he took Galava's leave and returned to his own abode.

'"When the king of the birds had left, Galava, travelled with the maiden, thinking about kings who had the capacity to pay the bride price. He thought of Haryashva Ikshvaku of Ayodhya, supreme among kings, immensely valorous and with the four constituent parts[202] in his army. He loved brahmanas and was the beloved of the citizens. He possessed treasuries, granaries and soldiers. He desired peace for his subjects and performed supreme austerities. The brahmana Galava went to Haryashva and said, 'O Indra among kings! This maiden of mine will give birth and extend lineages. O Haryashva! Accept her as your wife and give me a bride price. I will tell you what the bride price is. Hearing this, arrive at a decision.'"'

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'Narada said, "King Haryashva thought about many things. He released warm sighs at the lack of offspring. Then the supreme among kings said, 'She is high in the six high points.[203] She is slim in the seven places that should be slim.[204] She is deep in the three places[205] that should be deep. She is red in the five places that should be red.[206] She is fit to be seen in many worlds of gods and asuras and by many gandharvas. She has many auspicious marks. She is capable of giving birth to many. I am capable of giving birth to a son who will be an emperor.[207] O foremost among brahmanas! Tell me the bride price, remembering the state of my riches.' Galava replied, 'Give me eight hundred horses that have one black ear each. They must be as white as the moon. They must be built well and they must have been born in this country. Then this beautiful and long-eyed one will be the mother of your children, just as kindling is the womb of fires.' On hearing these words, King Haryashva, who was overcome with desire, was miserable. The rajarshi told Galava, supreme among rishis, 'I only have two hundred horses of the sort that you desire, though there are hundreds of other sacrificial horses that are roaming around. O Galava! I will give birth to a single son through her. Grant me this desire as a boon.' When the maiden heard these words, she told Galava, 'One who knows about the brahman once granted me a boon. After each time that I give birth, I will become a virgin again. Therefore, give me to the king and accept those supreme horses. By going to four kings in succession, you will obtain all the eight hundred horses. I will also have four sons. O supreme among brahmanas! Act in this way for the sake of your preceptor. I think that this is wise. O brahmana! What do you think?' Having been thus addressed by the maiden, the sage Galava told King Haryashva, 'O Haryashva! O best of men! Accept this maiden. Give birth to a single son through her, for one quarter of the bride price.' He[208] applauded Galava and accepted the maiden. At the right time and the right place, he obtained the son that he had wished for. He was named Vasumana. He was greater in riches than the Vasus. That lord of men resembled one of the Vasus and he became a great granter of riches.

'"After some time, the intelligent Galava presented himself again. He met Haryashva,

who was delighted in his mind, and told him, ‘O king! A son has been born to you and he is like the young sun in his radiance. O lord of men! It is now time for me to go to another king in search of alms.’ Haryashva was truthful in his words and truthful in his manliness. Since those horses were extremely rare, he returned Madhavi. Madhavi gave up the radiant prosperity of the king. Of her own will, she became a virgin again and followed Galava. The brahmana said, ‘Let the horses remain with you for the moment.’ With the maiden, he went to Divodasa, the lord of his subjects.”’

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‘“Galava said, ‘There is an immensely valorous lord of men named Divodasa. That lord is the lord of Kashi. He is a descendant of Bhimasena.[209] O fortunate one! Let us go there quickly. Do not sorrow. That lord of men is devoted to dharma. He is self-controlled and is devoted to the truth.’”

‘Narada said, “When the sage went to the king, he was greeted with honours. Galava then requested him to have offspring.”

‘“Divodasa replied, ‘O brahmana! I have heard about all this already. There is no need to say more. O supreme among brahmanas! As soon as I heard about this, I wished that this should happen. You have passed over many other kings and have come to me and this shows me great honour. There is no doubt that this will come to pass. O Galava! But so far as horses are concerned, I have the same number. Therefore, I will also give birth to one king through her.’”

‘Narada said, “The foremost among brahmanas agreed to this. He gave the maiden to the lord of the earth and the king accepted her in accordance with the prescribed rites. The rajarshi pleasured with her like Ravi[210] with Prabhavati, Vahni[211] with Svaha, Vasava with Shachi, Chandra with Rohini, Yama with Dhumorna, Varuna with Gouri, Dhaneshvara[212] with Riddhi, Narayana with Lakshmi, the ocean with Jahnavi,[213] Rudra with Rudrani, the grandfather[214] with the altar, Vasishtha’s son with Adrishyanti, Vasishtha with Akshamala, Chyavana with Sukanya, Pulastya with Sandhya, Agastya with Vaidharbhi, Satyavan with Savitri, Bhrigu with Puloma, Kashyapa with Aditi, Richika’s son[215] with Renuka, Koushika with Haimavati, Brihaspati with Tara, Shukra with Shataparva, Bhumipati with Bhumi, Pururava with Urvashi, Richika with Satyavati and Manu with Sarasvati. After King Divodasa pleasured with her, Madhavi gave birth to a single son named Pratardana. At the right time, the illustrious Galava came to Divodasa and told him, ‘O lord of the earth! Return the maiden to me. But keep the horses here, while I go elsewhere for a bride price.’ At the right time, Divodasa, lord of the earth who was established in truth and had dharma in his soul, returned the maiden to Galava.”’

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‘Narada said, “The famous Madhavi gave up her riches. Truthful to her words, she became a virgin and followed the brahmana Galava. Galava’s thoughts were fixed on accomplishing his own objective. He went to the city of Bhoja to see King Oushinara. He went and told the king, for whom valour was truth, ‘This maiden will bear you two sons who will be kings. Through this, you will attain your objectives, here and in the hereafter. O king! You will have two sons who will be like the sun and the moon. O one learned in all manner of dharma! But as a bride price, you will have to give me horses that have the complexion of the moon and they must each possess one black ear. You must give me four hundred of these. I am seeking these horses for my preceptor’s sake and not for my own. O great king! If you are capable, do it without thinking about it. O rajarshi! You are without offspring. O king! Give birth to two sons. Through these sons as boats, you will save your ancestors and yourself. O rajarshi! One who bears the fruit of sons is not cast out from heaven. He does not go to the terrible hell, where those without sons go.’ Having heard this and much else spoken by Galava, King Ushinara[216] gave him this reply, ‘O Galava! I have heard the words that you have spoken. O brahmana! My heart is inclined towards what you have said, but destiny is powerful. O supreme among brahmanas! I only possess two hundred such horses, though there are many thousands of others that are roaming around. O Galava! I will only have one son through her. O brahmana! I will also follow the path that the others[217] have. O supreme among brahmanas! I will also pay you the same price. My riches are for the enjoyment of the inhabitants of the cities and the country, not for myself.[218] O one with dharma in the soul! If a king uses the riches of others to satisfy his own desires, he obtains neither dharma nor fame. Therefore, I will accept the maiden. Give her to me. This maiden is like one born from the gods and a single son will be born to me.’ Galava, foremost among brahmanas, then worshipped King Ushinara, who had spoken many beneficial words. After giving her to Ushinara, Galava left for the forest. Like a meritorious one enjoys his prosperity, he[219] pleasured with her in mountainous caverns, waterfalls in rivers, diverse gardens, forests, groves, beautiful houses, the roofs of palaces, pavilions, vimanas and secluded rooms. In course of time, a son was born and he was as radiant as the young sun. That supreme among kings was famous by the name of Shibi. The brahmana Galava presented himself and accepted the maiden back. O king! He then left to visit Vinata’s son.”’

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‘Narada said, “Vinata’s son laughed and told Galava, ‘O brahmana! It is through good fortune that I see that you have been successful.’ On hearing these words spoken by Vinata’s son, Galava told him that one-fourth of his task still remained to be accomplished. Suparna, supreme among birds, told Galava, ‘You should not make any more efforts on this task. You will not be successful. O Galava! In earlier times, in

Kanyakubja, Richika tried to obtain Gadhi's daughter, Satyavati, as his wife, and was told, "O illustrious one! Give me one thousand horses that have the complexion of the moon and possess one black ear each."[220] Richika agreed and went to Varuna's abode. He obtained the horses at Ashvatirtha[221] and gave them to the king.[222] The king gave them away to brahmanas at a pundarika sacrifice. Many kings bought these from them, two hundred each. O supreme among brahmanas! While they were being led across the Vitasta, the remaining four hundred were killed.[223] O Galava! That being the case, no more can be obtained. O one with dharma in your soul! O bull among the brahmanas! Instead of the two hundred, give Vishvamitra this maiden, together with the six hundred you possess. O bull among brahmanas! You will then transcend your confusion and be successful.' Galava agreed to this. Taking the maiden with him, and together with Suparna, he went to Vishvamitra.

'"Galava said, 'Accept six hundred horses of the kind that you desired. Accept this maiden instead of the two hundred. She has born three sons, devoted to dharma, to rajarshis. O supreme among men! You will give birth to a fourth. Then you will obtain all eight hundred horses in their entirety. After having freed myself of my debt, I will happily perform austerities.'"

'Narada said, "Vishvamitra saw Galava and the bird and the maiden with the beautiful thighs and said, 'O Galava! Why did you not give her to me earlier? Then all the four sons would have been mine and would have extended the lineage. I will accept this maiden to have one son through her. Let all the horses remain in my hermitage.' The immensely radiant Vishvamitra then pleasured with her. Madhavi gave birth to a son named Ashtaka. As soon as the son was born, the immensely radiant Vishvamitra instructed him about dharma and artha and gave him the horses. Ashtaka went to the city that was as radiant as a city of the moon. Having returned the maiden to his disciple,[224] Koushika[225] left for the forest. Galava, together with Suparna, was delighted in his mind that the dakshina had been paid and told the maiden, 'You have given birth to one son who will be the lord of generosity, another who will be a warrior, yet another who will be devoted to truth and dharma, and another who will perform sacrifices. O one with the beautiful thighs! Therefore, depart. You have saved your father through sons. O one with the beautiful waist! You have saved four kings[226] and me.' Galava also gave permission to Suparna, the destroyer of serpents, to leave. Returning the maiden to her father, he left for the forest."'

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'Narada said, "The king[227] wished to hold a svayamvara for her. He went to a hermitage that was at the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna. Madhavi ascended a chariot that was adorned with garlands and flowers. Puru and Yadu[228] followed their sister to the hermitage. Serpents, yakshas, men, winged creatures, animals, birds and dwellers of

mountains, trees and groves gathered there. There was also an assemblage of lords of men from many countries. The forest was full of rishis who were like Brahma. The beautiful one was asked to choose a groom. But when the suitors were announced in due order, she chose the forest as her groom. The maiden descended from the chariot and bowed down before her relatives. Yayati's daughter went to the sacred forest and performed austerities. She observed diverse fasts, rites and restraint. She made herself light[229] and lived like a doe. She subsisted on excellent grass that was pungent and sweet, with soft and green blades that were like lapis lazuli. She drank excellent water that was holy, pure, cool and clean, flowing from streams. She roamed in forests where the lion, the king of deer, was absent. They were deserted and dense, but were free of conflagrations. Together with the deer, the forest-dwelling one was like a doe. She practised brahmacharya and earned a great deal of dharma.

'"Yayati followed the conduct of kings who had preceded him. He lived for many thousand years and then succumbed to the dharma of time. Puru and Yadu, supreme among men, extended two lineages. Because of this, Nahusha's son[230] obtained status in this world and the next. Having arrived in heaven, King Yayati attained greatness. Like a maharshi, the illustrious king obtained the best of fruits in heaven. After many thousand years had passed in many excellent ways among the great rajarshis and maharshis who were there, Yayati, confounded by ignorance, insulted all men, gods and the masses of rishis.[231] The god Shakra, the destroyer of Bala, detected his folly and all the rajarshis censured him. They glanced at Nahusha's son and reflected, 'Who is he, the son of which king? How did he arrive in heaven? What deeds brought him success? What austerities has he performed? How is he known in heaven? By whom is he known?' The kings who resided in heaven reflected in this way. They glanced at each other and asked such questions about King Yayati. The hundreds of guardians of vimanas, the protectors of the gates of heaven and the keepers of the seats were asked, and replied that they did not know him. All their knowledge was clouded and no one recognized the king. In an instant, the king lost all his energy."'

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'Narada said, "He was divested from his station and lost his seat. His mind trembled and he was tormented by the flames of grief. His garlands withered. His knowledge vanished. His crown and armlets fell down. He was dizzy and all his limbs turned numb. His ornaments and garments were dishevelled. He became invisible. Though he could see, he could not see any of the others. He was void and his mind was empty. He was about to fall down on the surface of the earth. 'What inauspicious thoughts have I harboured in my mind, causing offence to dharma? What has led me to losing my station?' The king thought in this way. But the kings, Siddhas and apsaras who were there, could no longer see Yayati. He was without a support and was dislodged. There

was a man who was in charge of throwing out those whose merits had been exhausted. O king! On the instructions of the king of the gods, he came and told Yayati, 'You are intoxicated because of your insolence. There is no one you have not disrespected. Your pride has dislodged you from heaven. O son of a king! You do not deserve it. No one knows you here. Go and fall down.' Thus did he speak. 'Let me fall down among virtuous ones.' About to fall down, Nahusha's son spoke these words thrice. That foremost among travellers thought about the path that he should take.

'"At that moment, he saw four bulls among kings in Naimisha and fell down in the midst of the kings. Pratardana, Vasumana, Ushinara's son Shibi and Ashtaka were performing a *vajapeya* sacrifice to satisfy the lord of the gods. The smoke from that sacrifice arose up to the gates of heaven. As he fell down towards the ground, King Yayati smelt this, which was like a river of smoke, like the Ganga, joining earth and heaven. The king floated down towards the ground. He descended among those four prosperous ones, foremost among those who sacrifice. The king fell down among the four who were like the guardians of the world. They were lions among kings and like the great fire into which oblations are offered. They were his relatives.[232] Rajarshi Yayati descended in that sacred sanctuary. He was radiant in his beauty and all the kings asked him, 'Who are you? Whom are you related to? Which country and city are you from? Are you a yaksha, god, gandharva or rakshasa? You do not have the form of man. What objective do you desire?'

'"Yayati replied, 'I am rajarshi Yayati. I have fallen from heaven because my merits have been exhausted. Desiring that I should fall among righteous ones, I have descended amidst you.'

'"The kings replied, 'O bull among men! May your wishes come true. Accept all our fruits of the sacrifice and the dharma.'

'"Yayati said, 'I am not a brahmana who can accept riches. I am a kshatriya. My mind is not inclined to destroying the merits of others.'"'

'Narada said, "At that time, the kings saw Madhavi, who was leading the life of a doe. When she arrived, they greeted her and asked, 'What is the reason behind your coming here? What instructions of yours must we carry out? O one rich in austerities! We will follow your commands. All of us are your sons.' On hearing their words, Madhavi was extremely delighted. She went to her father Yayati and honoured him. On seeing that her sons had their heads bowed down, the ascetic lady said, 'O Indra among kings! These are your daughter's sons. They are my sons. They are not strangers. They will save you. Those are the ancient ordinances. O king! I am your daughter Madhavi, who is living the life of a deer. I have also earned dharma. Accept half of that. O king! All men have a share in the fruits of offspring. O lord of the earth! That is the reason they wish to have daughter's sons like you.' Then all the kings bowed down their heads before their mother and honoured and saluted their maternal grandfather. They filled

the earth with their soft, unmatched and gentle words addressed towards him. The kings saved their maternal grandfather, who had been dislodged from heaven. At that time, Galava arrived there and told the king, 'Ascend to heaven with one-eighth of my austerities.'"'

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'Narada said, "As soon as he was recognized by those virtuous ones, Yayati, bull among men, regained his divine status and was freed from his fever. He had celestial garlands and garments. He was adorned in divine ornaments. He had celestial fragrances and qualities. He no longer touched the ground with his feet.[233] Vasumana was famous in the world as the lord of giving. In a loud voice, he first spoke these words to the king. 'I have obtained merit in this world through my commendable treatment of all the varnas. I will give that to you. The fruits of being generous, the fruits of being forgiving and possessing good conduct and the fruits of maintaining fires—I bestow all that on you.' Pratardana, bull among kshatriyas, then spoke these words. 'I have always been devoted to war and have been addicted to dharma in this way. I have obtained fruits in this world and earned fame, through the dharma of kshatriyas. I bestow these consequences of being brave on you.' The intelligent Shibi Oushinara spoke these sweet words. 'I have never uttered a falsehood to children, women, or even in jest—or in battles, calamities and emergencies. Go to heaven by virtue of that truth. O king! I can give up my life, my kingdom, my deeds and my happiness, but I cannot forsake truth. Go to heaven by virtue of that truth. I have pleased dharma with truth, the fire with truth and Shakra with truth. Go to heaven by virtue of that truth.' Rajarshi Ashtaka, the son of Koushika and Madhavi, who knew about dharma, also spoke to the one who had performed many hundreds of sacrifices.[234] 'O lord! I have performed hundreds of *pundarika* and *gosava* sacrifices and vajapeya sacrifices too. Obtain the fruits of those. I have no jewels, riches or other possessions that have not been used in these sacrifices. Go to heaven by virtue of that truth.' As his grandsons spoke to that lord of men one by one, the king gradually left the earth and ascended towards heaven. In this way, through their own dharma, sacrifices, generosity and deeds, those four kings and grandsons who had been born in royal lineages and extended their lineages, saved their maternal grandfather Yayati, who had been dislodged from heaven, through their good deeds. They rescued the immensely wise one and made him ascend to heaven.

'"The kings said, 'O king! We are your daughter's sons and we possess the dharma and qualities of kings. We have the qualities of all dharma. O king! O lord of the earth! Ascend to heaven.'"'

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'Narada said, "Having been thus made to ascend to heaven by those kings who were

extremely generous in the gifts they gave, Yayati took leave of his grandsons and was established in heaven. There was a shower of fragrant flowers. There was an auspicious breeze with a holy scent. Amidst this, he attained that eternal station because of the fruits earned by his grandsons. This was enhanced with his own deeds and he was resplendent with supreme prosperity. He was happily received in heaven by masses of gandharvas and apsaras, with singing and dancing. There was the sound of drums being beaten. He was applauded by many gods, rajarshis and bards. He was offered excellent hospitality and was honoured by the gods. He obtained the fruits of heaven. The grandfather[235] spoke to the happy and serene king, as if satisfying him with these words. 'Through your deeds in the world, you have entirely accumulated the four parts of dharma. This eternal world is yours. You will again have eternal fame in heaven because of your good deeds. O rajarshi! Darkness had clouded the intelligence of all those who dwell in heaven. They did not recognize you because of this. Because you were not known, you fell down. You have returned here again after your grandsons affectionately saved you. You have regained the station you had won through your deeds. This is immoveable, eternal, sacred, supreme, permanent and without decay.' Yayati replied, 'O illustrious one! I have a doubt. Please dispel it. O grandfather of the world! It is not proper that I should ask anyone else. I protected and extended my subjects for thousands of years. I performed many sacrifices and gave a flood of gifts and obtained great fruits. How could they be exhausted in such a short span of time? Why did I fall down? O illustrious one! You know that I had obtained eternal worlds.' The grandfather replied, 'You have protected and extended your subjects for thousands of years. You have perfomed many sacrifices and given a flood of gifts. You obtained fruits. But all of those were destroyed through a single taint and you were thrown down. O Indra among kings! The residents of heaven censured you because of your insolence. O rajarshi! If there is vanity, strength, violence, wickedness and deceit, this world cannot become eternal. O king! You should not disrespect those who are superior, inferior, or in the middle. No one can be an equal to those who are consumed by vanity. There is no doubt that men who recount the story of your fall and subsequent ascendance will be freed from all calamities.' O lord of the earth! In ancient times, Yayati was diminished by this taint of insolence and Galava because of his excessive obstinacy. Those who desire their own welfare should listen to the advice of well-wishers who wish them well. One should not be stubborn. Obstinacy gives rise to destruction. O Gandhari's son! Therefore, give up insolence and anger. O brave one! Make peace with the Pandavas. O king! Abandon your wrath. O king! Whatever is given, whatever is done, whatever austerities are observed, whatever sacrifices are performed—these are never destroyed. They do not diminish. No one other than the doer enjoys these. This great and supreme account is revered by those who are extremely learned and are without hatred. In this world, those who examine it and study it in great detail, learn

about the three objectives[236] and conquer the earth."'

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'Dhritarashtra said, "O illustrious one! O Narada! It is exactly as you have stated it to be. I also wish for the same thing. But I am not the master."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Having said this, he addressed Krishna. "O Keshava! You have told me what is good for heaven and for this world, what is in accordance with dharma and what is just. O son![237] But I cannot act on my own account. Nor can I do what pleases me. O Krishna! O mighty-armed one! Anga[238] and Duryodhana are wicked and act against my instructions. O Purushottama! Endeavour to persuade. O Janardana! You will accomplish an extremely great task as a well-wisher." Varshneya then spoke to the intolerant Duryodhana.

'Knowing everything about the nature of dharma and artha, he spoke these sweet words. "O Duryodhana! O supreme among the Kurus! Listen to these words of mine. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This is especially for your welfare and that of your well-wishers. You have been born in an immensely wise lineage! It is proper that you should act in the right way. You have learning and good conduct. You are endowed with all the good qualities. Those who are born in inferior lineages are evil in their soul, violent and without shame. O son![239] They are the likes of those who act in the ways you are thinking of. In this world, the inclinations of virtuous ones are in conformity with dharma and artha. O bull among the Bharatas! Those who are wicked are seen to act in a contrary way. This adharma and obstinacy shown by you is terrible and will bring about the great destruction of lives. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Because of what you have done, there have been many instances of ill fame. Abandon that which is against artha. O scorcher of enemies! You should do what is best for your welfare and for that of your brothers, servants and friends. Free yourself from a deed that will be against dharma and against fame. O tiger among men! O bull of the Bharata lineage! Make peace with the Pandavas. They are wise and brave. They have great enterprise and are self-controlled and extremely learned. O lord of the earth! O scorcher of enemies! That will be beneficial and pleasant for the intelligent Dhritarashtra, the grandfather,[240] Drona, the immensely intelligent Vidura, Kripa, Somadatta, the intelligent Bahlika, Ashvatthama, Vikarna, Sanjaya, your relatives and your many friends. O son![241] The entire earth finds refuge in peace. You have modesty. You have been born in a noble lineage. You are learned. You are not violent. O son![242] O bull among the Bharata lineage! Abide by the instructions of your father and mother. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is said that everything that a father instruct is supreme. O son![243] Peace with the Pandavas appeals to your father. O foremost among the Kurus! O son![244] This should appeal to you and your advisers also. He who hears the instructions of his well-wishers, but does not act in accordance with it, is eventually

burnt, like one who has eaten kimpaka.[245] Because of delusion, if one does not pay heed to beneficial words and procrastinates, one fails to accomplish one's objective and has to lament subsequently. He who listens to beneficial words and acts accordingly, giving up his own views, obtains happiness in this world. He who acts contrary to words that ensure artha and kama and listens to perverse advice, comes under the control of his enemies. If one transgresses the views of the virtuous and follows the views of the wicked, one's well-wishers will soon lament one's destruction. He who abandons his foremost advisers and serves inferior ones, will face a terrible calamity, with no prospect of overcoming it. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He who serves those of false conduct and does not listen to righteous well-wishers, preferring others to those who are his own, is cursed by the earth. You are against those brave ones. O bull among the Bharatas! You seek help from others who are wicked, incapable and foolish. Other than you, is there a man on this earth who will abandon maharatha relatives who are equal to Shakra and seek refuge with others? Ever since birth, you have always maltreated the Kounteyas. But no anger has been generated in the Pandavas, who have dharma in their souls. O son![246] O mighty-armed one! Ever since birth, the Pandavas have been falsely treated, but they have treated you well. O bull among the Bharata lineage! You should act in the same way towards them. Do not be overcome with anger against your foremost relatives. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The undertakings of wise ones follow the three objectives.[247] If all three objectives cannot be pursued at the same time, men follow dharma and artha. If those two cannot be reconciled, a wise one follows dharma. A medium person opts for artha. A child chooses kama. If one is driven by the senses and gives up dharma because of greed, and strives for kama and artha through inappropriate means, one is ruined. One who pursues kama and artha must still resort to dharma. Kama and artha can never be separated from dharma. O lord of the earth! It is said that dharma alone is the route towards all three objectives. If one strives for them in this way, one prospers, like a fire in a dry tree. O son![248] O bull among the Bharata lineage! You desire a great and radiant lordship that is accepted by all the kings. But you are not resorting to the right means. One should not maltreat those who treat one's own self in the right way. That is like cutting down a tree with an axe. One should not strike down the views of someone one is not trying to vanquish. If a wise person's views are not struck down, they ensure welfare. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! One should never ignore anyone in the three worlds, if that person is willing to give up his life, even if that person is an ordinary one—not to speak of the Pandava bulls. If a man comes under the influence of intolerance, there is nothing that he knows. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! All the excessive growth will be cut down. You will witness the proof. O son![249] An alliance with the Pandavas is superior to one with the wicked. If you live affectionately with them, you will obtain every object of desire. O supreme among kings! You will enjoy the land conquered by the Pandavas. But leaving

the Pandavas behind you, you seek salvation with others—Duhshasana, Durvisaha, Karna and Soubala. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Depending on them, you desire prosperity. They are no match for you in knowledge of dharma and artha. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They are no match for the Pandavas in valour. Nor are you, and all the kings combined, enough to look upon the face of an enraged Bhimasena in battle. O son![250] This entire army of kings assembled by you, with Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Kripa, Somadatta's son Bhurishrava, Ashvatthama, Jayadratha —all of them are incapable of withstanding Dhananjaya. An angry Arjuna is incapable of being vanquished by the gods, the asuras, men and the gandharvas. Do not get fixated on battle. In this entire army of kings, is there a single man who can face Arjuna in the field of battle and return safely to his home? O bull among the Bharata lineage! What is the point of this destruction of men? Show me one man whose victory will amount to a victory for you. In Khandavaprastha, he defeated the gods, the gandharvas, the yakshas, the asuras and the serpents. Which man can fight with him? In the same way, a great wonder is heard about Virata's city. A single one was enough to counter many. That was sufficient proof. Nevertheless, you wish to defeat in battle the invincible, unassailable and undecaying Jishnu, the brave Arjuna. With me as a second, who can challenge Partha when faced with him in battle? Not even Purandara himself! He can pluck out the earth with his arms. In his rage, he can burn up beings. He can topple the gods from heaven. Who will defeat Arjuna in battle? Look at your sons, your brothers, your kin and your relatives. O supreme among Bharatas! Let them not be destroyed because of what you do. Let the Kouravas survive. Let this lineage not be destroyed. O lord of men! May you not be called a destroyer of the lineage. May your deeds not be destroyed. These maharathas will establish you as the heir apparent and your father Dhritarashtra, lord of men, as the great king. O son![251] Do not ignore the prosperity that is about to rise. If you give up half to the Parthas, you will obtain great prosperity. Listen to the words of your well-wishers and make peace with the Pandavas. Living in affection and friendship with them, you will always be fortunate."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'O bull among the Bharata lineage! After listening to Keshava's words, Shantanu's son Bhishma addressed the intolerant Duryodhana. "The words spoken by Krishna are those of a well-wisher who desires peace. O son![252] Listen to them and do not act out of anger. O son![253] By not listening to the words of the great-souled Keshava, you will not obtain well-being, happiness, or good fortune. O son![254] The mighty-armed Keshava has told you how to act in accordance with dharma and artha. O king! Follow that path and do not bring destruction for your subjects. The prosperity of the Bharatas blazes among all the kings. While Dhritarashtra is alive, do not destroy it because of your evil-mindedness. By acting against Keshava's truthful and

beneficial words, you yourself, your advisers, your sons, your animals, your relatives, your father and the intelligent Vidura will confront death because of your own perversity. O best of the Bharatas! Do not travel along a deviant path followed by the evil-minded. Do not be the destroyer of your lineage! Do not be a wicked man. Do not cause grief to your aged father and mother." Then Drona spoke these words to Duryodhana, who was under the influence of intolerance and was sighing repeatedly. "O son![255] Keshava spoke words to you that are in conformity with dharma and artha. So did Shantanu's son, Bhishma. O lord of men! Pay heed to them. These two are wise, intelligent, self-controlled, extremely learned and wish to ensure your welfare. O scorcher of enemies! Accept the words that they have spoken for your benefit. O immensely wise one! Act in accordance with what Krishna and Bhishma have spoken. Do not listen to the words of those who are inferior in intelligence. Those who are encouraging you have never acted in your interest. When there is a war, they will thrust the enmity of others around your neck. Do not destroy the Kurus and all your sons and brothers. Know that when Vasudeva and Arjuna are together, that power is invincible. This opinion of your well-wishers, Krishna and Bhishma, is correct. O son![256] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If you do not accept it, you will rue it later. Arjuna is greater than what Jamadagni's son[257] has said. Krishna, Devaki's son, is one whom even the gods find difficult to withstand. O bull among the Bharata lineage! But what is the point of telling you about your happiness and welfare? You have been told all this. Do as you please. O supreme among the Bharatas! I am not interested in telling you anything more." After these words had been spoken, Kshatta Vidura looked at Duryodhana, Dhritarashtra's intolerant son, and said, "O Duryodhana! O bull among the Bharata lineage! I do not sorrow for you. I grieve for these two old ones, Gandhari and your father. As long as an evil-hearted one like you is their protector, they will wander around, unprotected. They have lost their friends. They have lost their advisers. They are like birds that have lost their wings. Grieving, they will roam the entire earth as beggars, having given birth to such a wicked and evil man, the destroyer of his lineage." King Dhritarashtra then addressed Duryodhana, who was seated with his brothers, surrounded by all the kings. "O Duryodhana! Listen to what the great-souled Shouri has said. Accept his auspicious and eternal words. They will get us what we aspire for and protect what we already possess.[258] Through the help of Krishna, whose deeds are unsullied, together with all the kings, we will obtain everything that we desire. O son! With Keshava's support, go to Yudhishthira. Act so that complete safety and good health of the Bharatas can be ensured. O son! With Vasudeva as the tirtha, go to the meeting. O Duryodhana! I think that the time has arrived now. Do not neglect the chance. If you abandon the peace that is being asked from you, you will rebuff Keshava and your defeat will be ensured. He has spoken thus for your own welfare."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing Dhritarashtra's words, Bhishma and Drona again spoke in his support to Duryodhana, who was not acting according to the instructions. "As long as the two Krishnas[259] are not armoured, as long as the Gandiva is resting, as long as Dhoumya[260] does not offer the foremost forces of the enemy into the fire of war, as long as the modest and great archer Yudhishthira does not angrily glance at your soldiers, till then, we may find peace. As long as we do not see the mighty archer Partha Bhimasena take his position among the divisions of his own army, till then, we may find peace. As long as he does not roam around and increase the delight of the soldiers, as long as he does not shatter the heads of those who are fighting on elephants in the war, as long as the destroyer of enemies does not use his club, as if against fruits on trees that have been ripened with time, till then, we may find peace. As long as Nakula, Sahadeva, Parshata Dhrishtadyumna, Virata, Shikhandi and Shishupala's son, all skilled in the use of weapons, do not armour themselves and swiftly penetrate, like crocodiles in the great ocean, till then, we may find peace. As long as arrows tufted with the feathers of vultures do not descend on the delicate bodies of kings, till then, we may find peace. As long as those swift and great archers do not use great iron arrows that can travel far to strike the breasts of warriors who have been anointed with sandalwood and aloe and are adorned with gold plates and necklaces, till then, we may find peace. Let Dharmaraja Yudhishthira, elephant among kings, hold you by the hands, while you bow your head down. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Let that extremely generous one[261] place his right hand, marked with the signs of a pennant, goad, elephant and flag, on your shoulder as a mark of peace. When you are seated, let him place his hands, adorned with gems and with jewels on the fingers, on your back. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Let the mighty-armed Vrikodara, whose shoulders are like a shala tree, embrace you and speak to you in conciliatory tones, for the sake of peace. O king! Honoured by the three, Arjuna and the twins, you will affectionately inhale the fragrance of their heads. On seeing you united with the brave Pandava brothers, let these lords of men release tears of joy. In a spirit of fraternity, let this be proclaimed in all the capital cities of the kings of the earth. Enjoy this and be bereft of fever."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing these unpalatable words in that assembly of the Kurus, Duryodhana spoke these words to the famous and mighty-armed Vasudeva. "O Keshava! Before speaking, you should have reflected on the matter. Why have you spoken as if you are specially censuring me? O Madhusudana! You have said that you are devoted to the Parthas. But have you examined the strengths and the weaknesses of the two causes? You, Kshatta, the king,[262] the preceptor and the grandfather censure only me, and not any other king. But I do not perceive that I have done anything

wrong. But all of you, including the kings, blame only me. O destroyer of enemies! O Keshava! On thinking about this, I do not see the slightest bit of wrong that I have committed. O Madhusudana! The Pandavas happily agreed to the gambling match. They lost their kingdom to Shakuni. How was this my crime? O Madhusudana! I ordered that whatever riches the Pandavas lost then, should instantly be returned to them. O foremost among victorious ones! It was not my crime that the invincible Parthas were defeated in another gambling match and exiled to the forest. On the basis of what disrespect do they seek the enmity now? O Krishna! The Pandavas are incapable, but are happily against us. What have we done to them? Because of what wrong do the Pandavas, together with the Srinjayas, wish to kill the sons of Dhritarashtra? Because of terrible deeds and words, we will not tremble and bow down out of fear, not even to Shatakratu. O Krishna! O slayer of enemies! I do not see anyone, who follows the dharma of kshatriyas, who can aspire to vanquish us in battle. O Madhusudana! Bhishma, Kripa, Drona and their armies are incapable of being defeated in battle by the gods, not to speak of the Pandavas. O Madhava! If observing our own dharma, we face death in the field of battle from a weapon, because our time has come, that will ensure heaven. O Janardana! The supreme dharma for kshatriyas is that we should lie down on a bed of arrows in the field of battle. O Madhava! If, on the field of battle, we lie down on beds meant for warriors, without bowing down before the enemy, we will not repent it. Is there anyone born in a noble lineage, following the dharma of kshatriyas, who will bow down out of fear, wishing to protect himself? 'Manliness lies in raising oneself and not losing enterprise. Even if all the joints are broken, one should not bow down before anyone.' These are the words of Matanga,[263] cherished by those who desire their own welfare. A man like me only bows down before dharma and brahmanas. Without paying attention to anyone else, that should be one's conduct, as long as one lives. This is the dharma of kshatriyas and that has always been my view. O Keshava! As long as I am alive, they will not obtain the share of the kingdom that my father once gave them. O Janardana! O Madhava! As long as Dhritarashtra is the king, we will lower our weapons and sustain ourselves from him. This kingdom should not have been given away. O Janardana! But when I was a child and not independent, it was given away, out of ignorance or fear. O descendant of the Vrishni lineage! But it cannot be obtained again by the Pandavas. O mighty-armed one! O Keshava! As long as I am alive, I will not give to the Pandavas even that much of land that can be held on the point of a sharp needle."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Dasharha's eyes showed his anger. In the assembly of Kurus, he laughed and spoke these words to Duryodhana. "You wish to obtain the bed of a warrior and your desire will be fulfilled. Station yourself with your advisers and there will be a

great destruction. O foolish one! You think that there is nothing reprehensible in your conduct towards the Pandavas. Let all the lords of men listen. You were tormented with the prosperity of the great-souled Pandavas. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! You plotted a gambling match with Soubala. O son![264] Your relatives are superior and are honoured by virtuous ones. They are not crooked in their conduct. How could they engage in a deceitful act with that deceitful one?[265] O immensely wise one! Gambling with the dice destroys the joy of the virtuous. Among those who are not virtuous, it creates dissension and difficulties. It was you who started this terrible and wicked gambling match with your wicked relatives, ignoring the norms of good conduct. Who else but you could have treated the wife of a relative in that way, bringing Droupadi to the assembly hall and speaking to her in that way? She has been born in noble lineage. She possesses good conduct. She is dearer to them than their lives. You maltreated that queen of the sons of Pandu. All the Kurus know how Duhshasana addressed the Kounteyas, the scorchers of enemies, in the assembly of the Kurus, when they were being exiled. Which virtuous man will act towards his relatives, in this contemptible way? They have followed righteous conduct. They have been devoid of greed. They have always acted in accordance with dharma. Karna, Duhshasana and you repeatedly used harsh words that are used by those who are violent and are not aryas. When they were children, together with their mother, you made great efforts to burn them up in Varanavata. But you were unsuccessful. At that time, the Pandavas and their mother lived for a long time in concealment in Ekachakra, in a brahmana's house. Through poison, through the bonds of snakes, you made every effort to destroy the Pandavas. But you were unsuccessful. This was your inclination towards the Pandavas. You were always devoted to falsehood. How have you not commited a crime towards the great-souled Pandavas? You have committed many such cruel deeds towards the Pandavas. You have resorted to false conduct, like one who is not an arya. You are now against everyone. Your mother and father, Bhishma, Drona and Vidura have all told you that you should make peace. O king! But you do not desire peace. There is great benefit to both you and Partha[266] in peace. O king! But because of the feebleness of your intelligence, this does not appeal to you. O king! But going against the advice of your well-wishers, you will not obtain salvation. O lord of the earth! You are acting against dharma and against fame." Dasharha was speaking to the intolerant Duryodhana in this way.

'Duhshasana then spoke these words in that assembly of the Kurus. "O king! It seems that if you do not have an alliance with the Pandavas on your own volition, the Kouravas will tie us up and hand us over to Kunti's son. O bull among men! Bhishma, Drona and your father will give the three of us—you, Vaikartana and I—to the Pandavas." On hearing his brother's words, Suyodhana, Dhritarashtra's son, arose in rage, hissing like a giant serpent. That evil-minded one paid no attention to anyone—

Vidura, Dhritarashtra, the great king Bahlika, Kripa, Bhishma, Drona or Janardana. Insulting those who deserve to be honoured, the uncontrolled, wicked and shameless one departed. Having seen that bull among men leave, all his brothers, advisers and all the kings followed him.

'On seeing Duryodhana angrily rise and leave the assembly hall, together with his brothers, Bhishma, Shantanu's son, said, "He who is overcome by anger and acts against dharma and artha, will soon be laughed at by his ill-wishers, when he is in difficulties. This evil-minded son of King Dhritarashtra does not know what is right. He suffers from false pride because of the kingdom. He is under the power of anger and avarice. O Janardana! I think the time has come for all the kshatriyas to be cooked by destiny, because in their delusion, all the kings and their advisers are following him." The valiant and lotus-eyed Dasharha heard Bhishma's words and told Bhishma, Drona and all the others who were there. "This is the supreme taint of all the elders among the Kurus, that they are not forcibly restraining this evil-minded king who is misusing his prosperity. O destroyers of enemies! I think the time has come to act in this way. O unblemished ones! Listen to me. If that is done, everything may still be well. Reflect on my words, which are for your welfare. O descendants of the Bharata lineage! See if they appeal to you as conducive to your welfare. While the aged king of Bhoja was still alive, his evil-minded and selfish son,[267] overcome by anger, seized his father's riches. Kamsa, Ugrasena's son, was abandoned by his relatives. For the welfare of his relatives, I punished him in a great battle. The other relatives and I then honoured and instated Ahuka's son, Ugrasena, as the king again and thereby extended the kingdom of the Bhojas. O descendant of the Bharata lineage![268] For the sake of the lineage, all the Bhojas, Andhakas and Vrishnis abandoned the solitary Kamsa and lived in happiness. O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When the gods and the asuras were arrayed in battle formations, with their weapons raised, and the world was divided into two sides and was about to be destroyed, Parameshthi Prajapati[269] said, 'The asuras, together with the daityas and the danavas, will be defeated. The Adityas, the Vasus and the Rudras will dwell in heaven. In this battle, the gods, the asuras, men, gandharvas, serpents and rakshasas will angrily kill one another.' Thinking this, Parameshthi Prajapati told Dharma, 'Bind the daityas and the danavas and give them to Varuna. Having been thus addressed and instructed by Parameshthi, Dharma bound the daityas and the danavas and handed them over to Varuna. Having bound them with Dharma's nooses and with his own nooses, Varuna, lord of the waters, has since then always carefully confined the danavas to the ocean. In the same way, fetter Duryodhana, Karna, Shakuni Soubala and Duhshasana and hand them over to the Pandavas. A man should be abandoned for the sake of a lineage. A lineage should be abandoned for the sake of a village. A village should be abandoned for the sake of a country. The earth should be abandoned for the sake of the soul. O king! O bull among the kshatriyas! If

you bind up Duryodhana and make peace with the Pandavas, the kshatriyas will not be destroyed for your sake."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'When Dhritarashtra, lord of men, heard Krishna's words, he quickly spoke to Vidura, learned in all manner of dharma. "O son![270] Go and bring the immensely wise and far-sighted Gandhari here. Together with her, I will be able to persuade the evil-minded one. If she can pacify that evil-souled and evil-minded one, we will be able to abide by the words of our well-wisher, Krishna. She might be able to show the path to the one who has been overtaken by avarice. He has evil intentions and evil aides. With her words, she may prove capable. If she can avert this great and terrible calamity brought on by Duryodhana, we will be saved and obtain peace, achieving for eternity what we wish to obtain and protecting that we possess."[271] On hearing the king's words and following Dhritarashtra's instructions, Vidura brought the far-sighted Gandhari. Dhritarashtra said, "O Gandhari! This evil-minded son of yours does not follow my instructions. Because of his greed for prosperity, he is sporting with his riches and his life. That wicked one is evil in his conduct and evil-souled. Ignoring his well-wishers, that foolish one has disrespectfully left the assembly hall." On hearing her husband's words, the famous princess Gandhari spoke these words, with the greatest welfare of everyone in mind. "Swiftly summon the son who is afflicted with a desire for the kingdom. The kingdom cannot be ruled by a person who seeks to destroy dharma and artha. O Dhritarashtra! But you yourself are to be greatly blamed for this. You knew that he was wicked. But out of affection for your son, you followed his intentions. He is obsessed with desire and anger. He is greedy and overcome by confusion. O king! He is incapable of being restrained through force. Dhritarashtra is reaping the fruits of giving the kingdom to a stupid, evil-souled and greedy one, who has evil aides. How can an immensely wise one overlook dissension amongst one's own relatives? When you have separated from your own relatives, your enemies will overcome you. O great king! If a difficulty can be averted through conciliation and gifts, why should one bring down a staff on one's own relatives?" At these words of the mother and on Dhritarashtra's instructions, Kshatta again brought the intolerant Duryodhana to the assembly hall.

'Wishing to hear what his mother had to say, he again entered the assembly hall. He sighed like a serpent in his anger and his eyes were copper-red. On seeing her deviant son enter, Gandhari censured him and spoke these appropriate words. "O Duryodhana! O son! Listen to my words, for the welfare and happiness of you and your relatives. If you resort to peace, you will honour Bhishma, your father and me, and also the other well-wishers, with Drona at the forefront. O immensely wise one! O bull among the Bharatas! A kingdom cannot be obtained, protected or enjoyed through one's own desires alone. Without controlling one's senses, one cannot retain a kingdom for a long

time. One who is intelligent and has controlled one's soul, can protect a kingdom. Desire and anger draw a man away from success. A king conquers the earth after subjugating these two enemies. It is great to be a lord and master of the world. An evil-souled one may obtain the kingdom and that status, but cannot retain it for long. One who aspires for greatness must subject his senses to dharma and artha. With the senses under control, the intelligence increases, like a fire with kindling. If they are not under control, they can lead to destruction, like an unskilled charioteer and uncontrolled horses on the road. If one wishes to control one's advisers without controlling one's own soul, with both one's own self and one's advisers out of control, one is subjugated. He who first controls his own soul, like conquering a country, then becomes successful in conquering his advisers and his enemies. Prosperity descends on a person who controls his senses, conquers his advisers, holds up the staff against delinquents, acts after deliberation and is steadfast. Desire and anger in the body destroy wisdom and are like two fish caught in a fine-meshed net. If desire and anger increase, the gods are scared of discord, and bar the gates to heaven to such a person if he travels there. A king who knows how to completely control desire, anger, avarice, insolence and pride, conquers the earth. If a king wishes for dharma and artha and defeat of the enemies, he must always devote himself to controlling his senses. He who is overcome by desire and anger and acts falsely towards his own, or those of others, will have no aides. They are brave, immensely wise and are the destroyers of enemies. O son! Having united with those Pandavas, you will happily enjoy the earth. O son! It is indeed as Bhishma, Shantanu's son, and maharatha Drona have told you. Krishna and the Pandavas are invincible. Seek refuge with the mighty-armed Krishna, whose deeds are unsullied. Keshava will be delighted at the happiness of both sides. A man, who does not follow the instructions of wise and learned well-wishers who desire his welfare, causes delight to his enemies. O son! There can be no welfare from a war, nor dharma and artha. How can there be happiness? Nor can there be eternal victory. Do not set your mind on war. O immensely wise one! O destroyer of enemies! Bhishma, your father and Bahlika gave Pandu's sons a part of the kingdom out of fear of dissension. You can see the fruits of that gift, since you now enjoy the entire earth, with those brave ones having killed the thorns.[272] O destroyer of enemies! Give the sons of Pandu what is due to them, if you and your advisers wish to enjoy the remaing half of the kings.[273] Half of the earth is sufficient for you and your advisers to sustain yourselves. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! By adhering to the advice of your well-wishers, you will attain fame. The Pandavas are prosperous. They have controlled their souls. They are intelligent. They have mastered their senses. O son! By engaging in a war with them, your great happiness will be destroyed. Control the wrath of your well-wishers. O bull among the Bharata lineage! After giving the sons of Pandu their own rightful share, rule over the kingdom. The hardship that they have suffered for thirteen years is enough. O immensely wise one!

Pacify the sentiments of desire and anger. The son of the *suta*[274] is firm in his anger and so is your brother, Duhshasana. They desire success, but are incapable of standing up to the Parthas. If Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Karna, Bhimasena, Dhananjaya and Dhrishtadyumna are enraged, it is certain that all the subjects will be destroyed. O son! Because you are overcome by intolerance, do not destroy the Kurus. The entire earth is touched by this, either on your side, or that of the Pandavas. If you foolishly think that Bhishma, Drona and Kripa and the others will fight with all their strength, this is not going to happen. They know their own selves. In kingship affection and status, they regard you and the Pandavas equally. And dharma transcends everything. Even if they lay down their lives, scared that the king will no longer give them a stipend, they will not be able to look King Yudhishthira in the face. It is not seen that men obtain artha out of avarice. O son! O bull among the Bharatas! Therefore, control your greed and be pacified."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'But he[275] disregarded his mother's sensible words. He had no control over his soul and he again left in anger. Having left the assembly hall, Kourava sought the advice of King Soubala Shakuni, skilled in dice. They decided on a course of action—Duryodhana, Karna, Shakuni Soubala and Duhshasana as the fourth. "Janardana is swift in his action. Before he captures us, with King Dhritarashtra and Shantanu's son, we will forcibly capture Hrishikesha, that tiger among men, like Indra seized Virochana's son.[276] On hearing that Varshneya has been seized, the Pandavas will lose their spirits. They will lose all their enterprise, like serpents whose fangs have been destroyed. That mighty-armed one is the refuge and armour for all of them. When the bull among all the Satvatas, the granter of boons, has been captured, all the Pandavas, together with the Somakas, will lose their initiative. Therefore, despite Dhritarashtra being angered, let us capture Keshava, who is swift in his action. Let us imprison him and fight with the enemies." Satyaki was wise and knew how to understand signs. He swiftly got to know about the wicked intentions of those wicked and evil-souled ones.

'Having got to know, he emerged with Hardikya.[277] He told Kritavarma, "Swiftly yoke the army and arrange them in battle formations. Armour them and wait at the gate of the assembly hall. Meanwhile, I will talk to Krishna, whose deeds are unsullied." The brave one entered the assembly hall, like a lion entering a mountainous cavern and communicated the intention to the great-souled Keshava. Thereafter, he laughingly told Dhritarashtra and Vidura about their intention. "They wish to perform a deed that is against dharma and artha and is censured by virtuous ones. The wicked ones wish to perform a task that cannot be performed. These foolish and evil-souled ones have gathered to commit crimes earlier. They have been overcome by desire and anger and have fallen prey to wrath and avarice. The ones with limited intelligence wish to

capture Pundarikaksha. Like children and idiots, they wish to capture a flaming fire in a piece of cloth." Hearing Satyaki's words, the far-sighted Vidura told the mighty-armed Dhritarashtra in that assembly of the Kurus. "O king! O scorcher of enemies! Destiny is encompassing all your sons. They are attempting to commit a reprehensible deed that is incapable of being performed. They plan to overcome, capture and oppress Pundarikaksha, the younger brother of Vasava himself. This tiger among men is invincible and unassailable. They will no longer exist, like insects before a fire. If Janardana so wishes, he can despatch all of them to Yama's abode, like an enraged lion with deer. But he will never embark upon a reprehensible act. Achyuta Purushottama will never deviate from dharma." On hearing Vidura's words, Keshava glanced towards Dhritarashtra and, in the hearing of his well-wishers, spoke these words. "O king! If those enraged ones wish to capture me with their energy, let them try. O lord of the earth! I know their strength and I will be able to control those angry ones. But I am not interested in doing anything that can be censured. By desiring the riches of the Pandavas, your sons will lose their own. If this is what they want, Yudhishthira will accomplish his objective. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O king! At this instant, I can capture them and their followers and hand them over to the Parthas. There can be nothing wrong with that act. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O great king! But I do not wish to perform such a reprehensible deed in your presence, generated out of anger and evil intelligence. O king! But if this is what Duryodhana wants, so be it. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I will allow for all possibilities." On hearing this, Dhritarashtra told Vidura, "Quickly go and bring that wicked Suyodhana, who is greedy for the kingdom, together with his friends, his advisers, his brothers and his followers. Let me again see if I can bring him to the right path." Kshatta again brought the reluctant Duryodhana to the assembly hall, together with his brothers and surrounded by all the kings.

'King Dhritarashtra then spoke to Duryodhana and Karna, Duhshasana and the kings who surrounded them. "O cruel one! O one born in sin! With your assistants, you are embarking on a heinous deed. Your aides are wicked. Together with them, you wish to perform an evil deed. This is incapable of being done. It brings ill fame. It is censured by those who are righteous. Only foolish ones like you, who bring ill repute to their lineages, can think of this. Pundarikaksha is indomitable and unassailable. Together with your evil advisers, you wish to oppress and capture him. All the gods, together with Vasava, are incapable of using force against him. But you desire that like a wicked one, like a child asking for the moon. You do not know that gods, men, gandharvas, asuras and serpents are incapable of withstanding Keshava in battle. No hand can grasp the wind. No hand can touch the moon. No head can bear the earth. No force can grasp Keshava." After Dhritarashtra had spoken in this way, Kshatta Vidura spoke these words to Dhritarashtra's intolerant son Duryodhana, who was looking on. "At the gate of

Soubha, Dvivida, Indra among the apes, enveloped Keshava with a mighty shower of rocks.[278] Desiring to capture Madhava through his valour, he made every kind of endeavour. But he was incapable of grasping him and now you wish to use force. At Pragjyotisha, Naraka and the other danavas could not grasp Shouri and now you wish to use force. In his childhood, when he was a mere infant, he killed Putana.[279] O bull among the Bharata lineage! He held up Govardhana to protect the cows. He slew Arishta, Dhenuka, the immensely strong Chanura, Ashvaraja and the wicked Kamsa.[280] He slew Jarasandha, Vakra, the valiant Shishupala and Bana and killed many kings in battle. He has conquered King Varuna and the infinitely energetic fire god. When he stole the *parijata* flowers, he defeated Shachi's consort himself. When he was asleep on the single and large ocean, he killed Madhu and Kaitabha.[281] In another birth, he killed Hayagriva.[282] He is the one who does everything. He has not been created. He is the source of all virility. Without any effort, he does whatever he wishes to do. You do not know Govinda Achyuta, whose valour is terrible. His anger is like that of a virulent serpent. His mass of energy cannot be vanquished. You are seeking to assail the mighty-armed Krishna, whose deeds are unsullied, like an insect against a fire. You and your advisers will be destroyed."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'When Vidura spoke in this way, the valiant Keshava, the destroyer of large numbers of the enemy, spoke to Duryodhana, Dhritarashtra's son. "O Suyodhana! In your folly, you think of me as a single person. O one with extremely evil intelligence! You desire to overpower and capture me. Here are all the Pandavas, and the Andhakas and the Vrishnis. Here are the Adityas, the Rudras, the Vasus and the maharshis." Saying this, Keshava, the destroyer of enemy warriors, laughed out aloud. When the great-souled Shouri was laughing, the thirty gods sprouted from his sides. They were like lightning, but were as small as a thumb. They were as radiant as the fire. Brahma appeared on his forehead and Rudra on his chest. The guardians of the world were on his arms[283] and Agni was created from his mouth. The Adityas, the Sadhyas, the Vasus, the Ashvins, Indra and the Maruts and the Vishvadevas manifested themselves and the forms of the yakshas, the gandharvas and the rakshasas also appeared. Sankarshana[284] and Dhananjaya appeared on his two arms, the archer Arjuna on the right and Rama, the wielder of the plough, on the left. Bhima, Yudhishthira and Madri's two sons appeared on his back. The Andhakas and the Vrishnis, with Pradyumna at the head, appeared in front of Krishna, with their great weapons raised up. The conch shell, the chakra, the club, the spear, the Sharnga,[285] the plough and Nandaka[286] could be seen. And many other weapons were raised up. They were radiant in all the directions, around Krishna's many arms. From his eyes, nose and ears emerged extremely terrible flames of fire with smoke. Rays like those of the sun emerged from the pores of his body.

When they saw the terrible form of the great-souled Keshava, all the kings were frightened in their hearts and closed their eyes, with the exception of Drona, Bhishma, the immensely intelligent Vidura, the immensely fortunate Sanjaya and the rishis, rich in austerities, because the illustrious Janardana gave them divine sight.

'At the great and extraordinary sight of Madhava on the floor of that assembly hall, the drums of the gods were sounded and flowers were showered down. The entire earth trembled and the oceans shivered. O bull among the Bharata lineage! All the lords of the earth were extremely astounded. Then that tiger among men, destroyer of enemies, withdrew his real form, which was divine, extraordinary, colourful, prosperous and radiant. Madhusudana took the permission of the rishis and grasping Satyaki and Hardikya by the hand, departed. Narada and the other rishis also disappeared and that was another extraordinary marvel in that confusion.

'On seeing him leave, the Kouravas, together with the kings, followed that tiger among men, like the gods follow Shatakratu. However, ignoring that entire circle of kings, Shouri, whose soul cannot be measured, went out, like a fire trailing smoke. His chariot was large and bright, decorated with bells. It was colourful with nets of gold. It was light and roared like a cloud. It was covered with bright tiger skins and was yoked to Sainya and Sugriva. Daruka appeared. Maharatha Hardikya Kritavarma, the revered hero of the Vrishnis, also appeared, riding on his chariot. Shouri, destroyer of enemies, was about to leave on his chariot, which had been prepared. The great king Dhritarashtra again spoke to him. "O Janardana! You have seen how much power I possess over my sons. O destroyer of enemies! You have witnessed all of it and nothing has happened without your seeing it. O Keshava! Knowing that I wish for peace among the Kurus and have made efforts and knowing about my condition, you should not have any doubts about me. O Keshava! I have no evil intentions towards the Pandavas. You know the words that I have spoken to Suyodhana. O Madhava! All the Kurus and the kings who are the lords of the earth know that I tried for peace and made every kind of effort." Then the mighty-armed one told Dhritarashtra, the lord of men, Drona, the grandfather Bhishma, Kshatta, Bahlika and Kripa, "You have witnessed what happened in the assembly of the Kurus, when that wicked and evil one arose repeatedly in anger. Dhritarashtra, lord of the earth, has said that he is helpless. I wish to take leave from all of you. I will go to Yudhishthira now." Having sought their permission thus, Shouri, bull among men, left on his chariot. Those brave and great archers, bulls among Bharatas, followed him—Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Kshatta, Dhritarashtra, Bahlika, Ashvatthama, Vikarna and maharatha Yuyutsu. While the Kurus looked on, he left on his bright and large chariot, decorated with bells, and went to his father's sister, Pritha.'[287]

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Vaishampayana said, 'He entered her house,[288] bowed at her feet and told her

everything that had happened in the assembly of the Kurus.

'Vasudeva said, "Many kinds of acceptable and beneficial words were spoken by me and the rishis, but he[289] did not accept them. Cooked by destiny, all of them are under Duryodhana's control. I seek your leave. I will swiftly go to the Pandavas. What shall I tell the Pandavas on your behalf? O immensely wise one! I wish to hear your words and will act accordingly."

'Kunti replied, "O Keshava! Tell the great-souled King Yudhishthira, 'Your dharma has greatly declined. O son! Do not act in vain. O king! You have learned the sacred texts, but not properly, and have missed out on their insight. You have focused on the literal words and therefore, your intelligence only focuses on limited dharma. Consider the complete dharma that was created by the one who created himself.[290] The kshatriya was created from his chest, to earn a living through the valour of his arms, always resorting to cruel deeds for the protection of the subjects. Hear about an example that I have heard from the elders. In earlier times, Vaishravana was once delighted and gave the earth to rajarshi Muchukunda,[291] but he did not accept it. "I desire to enjoy a kingdom that I have obtained through the strength of my arms." On hearing this, Vaishravana was surprised and delighted. Subsequently, King Muchukunda did rule over the earth, earned through the strength of his arms, completely following the dharma of a kshatriya. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If a king protects his subjects and they act in accordance with dharma, the king enjoys one-fourth of that dharma. When a king acts in accordance with dharma, he warrants the status of a god. If he practises adharma, he goes to hell. If a lord imposes chastisement on the four varnas in accordance with the dharma that they should follow, that ensures that they do not transgress dharma. If a king follows chastisement properly and completely, this signifies the commencement of the best era, known as krita yuga. You should have no doubts about whether the era creates the king, or the king creates the era. It is the king who creates the era. The king is the creator of krita yuga, treta and dvapara. The king is also the cause of the fourth yuga.[292] If a king is the cause of krita, he enjoys heaven for eternity. If a king is the cause of treta, he enjoys heaven, but not for eternity. By leading to the commencement of dvapara, a king obtains an appropriate share of those fruits. An evil-acting one dwells in hell for an eternity.[293] The earth is touched by a king's taints and he is also touched by the earth. Observe the dharma of kings that was followed by your fathers and grandfathers. The conduct that you wish to establish yourself in, is not that of a rajarshi. If a king is touched by lassitude and is based on non-violence, he does not obtain the fruits that result from protecting the subjects. Pandu, I and your grandfather did not bless you earlier, so that you might act in accordance with your intelligence. Sacrifices, generosity, austerities, valour, wisdom, offspring, greatness, strength and energy are what we always asked for. When they are satisfied through pure worship, the gods give men constant svaha, constant svadha,[294]

long lives, riches and sons. Ancestors and gods always desire generosity, learning, sacrifices and the protection of the subjects in their sons. Whether it is dharma or adharma, you should follow it by virtue of your birth. O son! You are learned and have been born in a noble lineage. But you are oppressed because you have been following the wrong conduct. When earth-dwellers are hungry, they search for a brave one who is the lord of generosity. They seek refuge with him for their satisfaction. What can be a greater dharma than that? When one who follows dharma obtains a kingdom, he always satisfies everyone—some through gifts, some through force, and others through truthful conduct. A brahmana must live on alms, a kshatriya must protect, a vaishya must devote himself to earning riches and a shudra must serve them. Begging is forbidden for you and you should not resort to agriculture.[295] O son! You are a kshatriya, you are the one who saves from injuries, you sustain yourself through the strength of your arms. O mighty-armed one! Your ancestral right has been immersed. Raise it up again. Use conciliation, generosity, dissension, chastisement[296] and policy. What can be a greater misery for me than that I should be in this state, with my relatives destitute? O one who causes delight to your enemies! After having given birth to you, I have to look towards the alms given by others. Fight according to the dharma of kings and do not keep your ancestors immersed. With your merits exhausted, together with your younger brothers, do not travel along the evil route.'""

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'Kunti said, "O scorcher of enemies! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted, about a conversation between Vidula[297] and her son. She told him about what he should do for his welfare. She was famous and was born in a noble lineage. She was radiant and was also wrathful. Vidula was far-sighted, fortunate and devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas. She was renowned in the assemblies of kings because of her learned words and great erudition. The lady named Vidula was truthful. She once censured the son who was born from her womb, when he was defeated by the king of Sindhu and was lying down, dejected in his intelligence. He was miserable and ignorant about dharma. He increased the delight of his enemies.

""'Where did you come from?[298] You were not born from me or your father. You are such a coward that you have no anger. You are like a lowly branch. You are a man, but are acting like a eunuch. You can remain hopeless for the rest of your life. But for your own welfare, bear the burden. Do not think of yourself as inferior. Do not be satisfied with trifles. Set your mind on great welfare. Do not be afraid. Show some spirit. Arise. You are a coward. Don't lie there in this defeated state. You are the delight of all your enemies. You are causing grief to all your relatives. An inferior[299] river is soon filled, the paws of a mouse are soon filled, a coward is greatly satisfied and content with little. Without uprooting the fangs of a snake, are you going to die like a dog? Or will you

exhibit some valour, even at the expense of your life? Will you be seen circling silently and unafraid in the sky like a hawk, waiting for a weakness in the enemy? Why are you lying down like a corpse, as if you have been struck by lightning? Arise, you coward! Do not lie down, defeated. Do not vanish in your misery. Make yourself famous through your own deeds. Do not be medium, inferior, or the worst. Be strong. Blaze up, even if it is only for an instant, like a kindling of *tinduka*.[300] Do not burn like the flame of husk. Do not lead the fugitive life of a crow. It is better to blaze for an instant, than to only yield smoke for a long time. Let no son be born in a royal house who is as mild as a she-mule. As long as a person performs manly deeds and achieves the greatest objective, he acts according to dharma and triumphs and there is no need for him to censure himself. Whether he is unsuccessful, or whether he is successful, a learned person does not lament. He moves on to the next task, without setting store by his life. Either display your valour, or head towards an objective that is certain.[301] O son! When you have placed dharma first, why should you remain alive?[302] O eunuch! Your sacrifices, your donations and all your deeds have been destroyed. The roots of your enjoyment have been severed. Why should you remain alive? If one is sinking and is about to fall, one should grasp the enemy by the thigh.[303] Even if one has been destroyed by the roots, one should never sorrow. One should remember the achievements of well-bred horses. One should arise, lift the burden and excel. Know your own manliness and achieve spirit and honour. The lineage has been immersed because of your own deeds. Raise it up. If men do not talk about a person's feats as greatly extraordinary, he only increases the ranks of the ordinary. He is neither a woman, nor a man. A man whose generosity, austerities, valour, learning, riches and gains are not famously spoken about, is his mother's excrement.[304] One becomes a man through deeds of learning, austerities, prosperity and valour. A man who surpasses others in deeds, has truly been born. Do not resort to the livelihood of one with a begging bowl. This is wicked, reprehensible, cruel and vile and leads to misery. It is followed by cowards. Enemies welcome such a feeble man. The worlds despise him. He is inferior in his food and garments. He gains nothing and is inferior. He lives on nothing and he is himself only nothing. His relatives obtain no happiness from having got such a person as a relative. We have been banished from our kingdom. We have no means of livelihood. We have fallen in status. We have been deprived of all the objects of desire. We have been dislodged from our positions. We are nothing. O Sanjaya![305] I have given birth to Kali in the form of a son. He is not virtuous and acts contrary to the norms of his varna. You are the destroyer of the lineage and you have nothing in you. You have no anger. You have no enterprise. You have no valour. You are the delight of your enemies. Let no woman give birth to a son like this. Do not only produce smoke. Blaze up. Attack and conquer the enemies. Even if it is for an instant, blaze up over the heads of the enemies. One is a man to the extent one is intolerant and unforgiving. One who is forgiving and does not have anger, is neither a

woman, nor a man. Satisfaction destroys prosperity and so do lack of anger, lack of enterprise and fear. Nothing great can be obtained without enterprise. Liberate yourself from these evil traits. Liberate yourself from your own self. Have steel in your heart and hunt again for what belongs to you. A man is called *purusha* because he vanquishes a city.[306] If one lives like a woman, one falsifies one's name. There are brave and spirited ones who roam around with the valour of lions. Their fate may be determined by destiny, but the subjects rejoice. He who hunts for prosperity, giving up his own self and his beloved happiness, soon brings delight to his advisers.'

'"The son replied, 'If you do not behold me,[307] what is the use of this entire earth to you? What will ornaments, objects of desire and life itself mean to you?'

'"The mother said, 'Let your enemies obtain the worlds of those who lament, "What should be done now?" Let your well-wishers travel to the worlds meant for those who have great souls. Do not follow the conduct of those who are deserted by their servants and live on alms given by others, those who are miserable and without spirit. O son! May brahmanas and our well-wishers obtain their sustenance through you, just as all beings obtain lives through rain and the gods through Shatakratu. O Sanjaya! A man on whom all living beings depend, like a tree with ripe fruit, is one whose life has meaning. A brave and valiant one, who sustains the happiness of his relatives, like the thirty gods by Shakra, leads a virtuous life. A man who lives on the strength of his arms obtains fame in this world and an auspicious objective in the hereafter.'"'

795(132)

'"Vidula said, 'If you wish to give up your manliness in your present state, you will soon follow the path travelled by the inferior. A kshatriya who does not display energy to the best of his capacity and who does not exhibit his valour, desiring to remain alive, is said to be a thief. My meaningful, appropriate and beneficial words do not reach you, like medicine to someone who is about to die. It is true that the king of Sindhu has many satisfied subjects. But they are weak and foolish and are waiting for a calamity to strike them. When they see you collect aides one by one and behold your manliness, they will lose heart and his enemies will join you. Conduct alliances with them and roam around in mountainous forts, waiting for the time when he will be destroyed. He is not beyond old age. Nor is he immortal. You are Sanjaya only in name. I do not see it in you.[308] O son! Live up to your name. Do not make your name false. When you were only a child, an immensely wise brahmana who had foresight said, "After confronting great hardships, he will prosper again." Remembering those words, I hope that you will be victorious. O son! Therefore, I am repeatedly telling you about this. If others thrive on the perseverance with which a person pursues his goals, and if he pursues these goals with reflection, that person will certainly be successful. Your ancestors also confronted prosperity and adversity. O Sanjaya! Knowing this—fight. Do not turn back.

Shambara[309] has said that there is nothing more miserable than not seeing where today's and tomorrow's meal will come from. He said that this is a greater misery than the death of one's husband and sons. Poverty is nothing but progressive death. I have been born in a great lineage. I have gone from one pond to another.[310] I have been the mistress of everything fortunate. I have been extremely honoured by my husband. Earlier, masses of well-wishers saw me bedecked in expensive garlands and ornaments, adorned in excellent garments. I am in penury now. O Sanjaya! When you see me and your wife extremely weak, what purpose can life have for you? The slaves and servants who used to work for us, the preceptors and the foremost priests have left us, because they no longer have sustenance. On seeing this, what purpose can life have for you? If I do not see you today, performing the illustrious and praiseworthy deeds that you used to earlier, how can there be peace in my heart? My heart is shattered when I have to say no to brahmanas. Neither my husband nor I, have ever said no to a brahmana. Others seek refuge with us. But we do not seek refuge with others. If I now have to depend on others for a living, I will give up my life.

"""When there are no shores, provide us a shore. When there are no boats, be our boat. When there is no status, find us status. Revive those of us who are dead. If you do not cling to life, you are capable of withstanding all your enemies. But if you follow this conduct of an eunuch, depressed in mind and troubled in soul, then free yourself of this wretched life. A brave one becomes famous by killing a single enemy. Indra became the great Indra by slaying Vritra alone. He obtained the great Indra's cup for drinking soma and the lordship of the worlds. He proclaimed his name in battle and challenged the armoured enemies. When he drives away the best of armies and kills the best of warriors in an excellent battle, a brave one obtains great fame. His enemies tremble and bow down before him. Men who are cowards are helpless. If a skilled warrior is prepared to give up his life in battle, they satisfy every desire that he has for riches. Even if there is terrible danger to the kingdom, even if there is doubt about remaining alive, virtuous ones do not leave any remnants of an enemy who is near. The kingdom is a road to heaven, it is like amrita itself. It allows for only one[311] and it is closed to you. Knowing this, descend like a firebrand on the enemy. O king! Defeat your enemies in battle. Follow your own dharma. O fortunate one! Let the enemies not see you in this extremely dejected state, surrounded by our miserable people and delighted foes. Let me not be miserable at seeing you in this miserable state. Pleasure with the maidens of Souvira.[312] Boast about your prosperity, as you used to do earlier. Do not be so exhausted and come under the control of the maidens of Sindhu. You are young and handsome, possess learning and have been born in a good lineage. You are renowned and famous in the world. One like you should not act in this way, like a bull that cannot bear the burden. I think that this is worse than death. If I see you speaking pleasant words to the enemy, or following behind him, how can there be peace in my heart? No

one born in this lineage has ever followed others. O son! You should not live in this way, sustaining yourself on another. I know the eternal heart of kshatriyas, as described by our ancestors and those who came after them, and also by the ancestors of the enemy and those who came after them. A kshatriya who has been born in this world and knows about the dharma of kshatriyas, will never bow down before another, either out of fear or to earn a living. Stand upright in manliness. Do not make efforts to bend. It is better to break at the joints than to bend down. O Sanjaya! You should be strong in your mind and roam around like a rutting elephant, bowing down before brahmanas and dharma. Control the other varnas and chastise all those who perform evil acts. Whether you possess allies or do not possess allies, you should always live in this way.'"'

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'"The son said, 'O mother! You have converted your heart into steel. There is no compassion in you. Incited by the wisdom of bravery, you have become intolerant. Shame on the conduct of kshatriyas, about which you are censuring me, as if I am a stranger. You are speaking such words to your only son. If you can no longer see me, what purpose will the entire earth have for you? What use will there be of ornaments, or of the pleasures that life brings?'

'"The mother replied, 'O son! Everything done by the learned is for the purpose of dharma and artha. O Sanjaya! I have incited you with a view to those ends. The great moment has arrived for you to decide on your course of action. With the time having arrived, if you do not act accordingly, you will be dishonoured and commit a deed of extreme cruelty. O Sanjaya! You have already been touched by ill fame. If I do not speak to you in this way, my affection towards you will be like that of a she-ass, without strength and without purpose. Abandon the path censured by the righteous and frequented by the stupid. This is the great ignorance to which all beings cling. If your conduct is that of the virtuous, you will be my beloved, that is, if you have the qualities of dharma and artha and never follow anything else. This recognizes destiny and human endeavour and is the conduct of the virtuous. If one finds delight in a son or a grandson who does not have humility and does not exert himself, one loses the fruits of obtaining offspring. Those who perform deeds that should not be performed are censured. Such inferior men obtain no happiness, in this world and the next. O Sanjaya! A kshatriya has been created to fight and be victorious, for always performing cruel deeds and protecting the subjects. Whether he triumps, or whether he is slain, he attains Indra's world. But in Shakra's sacred and celestial world, the happiness that a kshatriya obtains from subjugating his enemy, is missing. Let the spirited man who has been defeated many times be tormented by rage and wait to exact vengeance on the enemy. In what other way can he find peace, other than giving up his own life or bringing down the enemy? In this world, a wise man is not delighted with a trifle. It is certain that a

person who is delighted with a trifle, will not remain happy with that trifle. In the absence of what he desires, a man will not be radiant. It is certain that he will feel empty, like the Ganga after flowing into the ocean.'

'"The son said, 'O mother! You should not speak in this way, certainly not to your son. You should look for compassion, like one who is deaf and mute.'

'"The mother replied, 'It is a great pleasure to me that you look on it in this way. You are inciting me in this way, so that I can incite you some more. I will honour you when you have killed all the Saindhavas and I see you victorious, free of all your worries.'

'"The son said, 'I have no treasury. I have no allies. How can I obtain the success of victory? This is my extremely terrible state and I know about my own self. I have withdrawn from the kingdom, like a performer of evil deeds withdraws from heaven. This being the situation, I cannot see any means. You are mature in your wisdom and I am asking you. Tell me exactly and I will act entirely in accordance with your instructions.'

'"The mother replied, 'O son! You should not demean yourself because of your earlier failures. Objects that were not obtained earlier can be obtained. In the same way, those that were obtained can be destroyed. Stupid ones cannot obtain objects through anger at their absence. O son! The fruits of all deeds are never permanent. Knowing that they are not permanent, one may be successful or one may fail. But those who do not act, never obtain success. Lack of trying has only one consequence—failure. However, for those who try, there are two consequences—success or failure. O son of a king! He who knows in advance that all success is impermanent, repels growth and prosperity and acts against his own interests. One should arise. One should awake. One should yoke oneself to the task that must be done. Without any hesitation, one must always make up one's mind that something needs to be done. One should consider auspicious signs and honour brahmanas and the gods. O son! There is swift prosperity for such a wise king. Like the sun rising in the east, Lakshmi returns to him. I have instructed you with many instances and words and you have appreciated them. Now display your form. Exhibit your manliness. It is appropriate that you should obtain the objects that you desire. Examine those who are angry, greedy, weak, dishonoured and disrespected and those who hate him.[313] In this way, you can bring them together and create great dissension in his ranks, like an extremely swift wind that disperses the clouds. Be the first to give them gifts. Make efforts. Speak pleasantly to them. As soon as the enemy knows that you are ready to give up your life, he will shrink away from you, like from a snake that has penetrated his house. If one knows that the enemy is too powerful to be conquered, one should use conciliation, friendliness and similar methods. Through such methods, one can obtain riches and extend them. Friends gather around those who are prosperous and serve them. O son! Then again, relatives desert one whose prosperity has been dissipated. They do not gather around such a man, but shun him. If one can convert an

enemy into an ally and obtain his trust, one can then think about regaining the kingdom.'""

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'"The mother said, 'Confronting any calamity, the king should never be afraid. Even if his heart is shattered, he should not exhibit this fear. On seeing that a king is frightened, everyone is scared. The kingdom, the soldiers and the advisers become divided in their views. Some may seek refuge with the enemy, others may desert the king. Others who have been slighted earlier may try to strike back. Though powerless, only extreme well-wishers remain with him, desiring salvation, like a cow whose calf has been tethered. They sorrow over his sorrow, as if over relatives who have died. Even those who were honoured before and those who were regarded as well-wishers, covet the kingdom of a king who has confronted a hardship. Do not be frightened. Otherwise, your well-wishers will desert you in their fear. I have said all this to you, questioning your power, manliness and intelligence. I have attempted to incite you, like a strong person behaving towards a weaker one. O Sanjaya! If you have understood everything that I have said, then arise. Be peaceful in your mind and strive for victory. We possess a large treasury that is not known to you. No one except I knows about this and I will give this to you. O Sanjaya! You still possess many hundreds of well-wishers. O brave one! They will accompany you, in happiness and unhappiness. They will not retreat and each is worth one hundred. These are appropriate allies for a man who wishes to obtain what he wants. They are advisers who are destroyers of the enemy.'

'"The son replied, 'Even if one hears such words, colourful, meaningful and with purport and rhythm, from a person with limited intelligence, how can one not cast away the darkness? With you, one who can see the past and the future, as my leader, I will shoulder this burden, even if it is in the water and is ebbing away. Because I wished to hear every word from you, I have generally been silent, but for contradicting you once in a while, like one who is not satisfied with amrita obtained from a relative at the time of a hardship. I will now endeavour to destroy the enemy and accomplish victory.'"

'Kunti said, "He was incited like an excellent horse, prodded by the arrows of her words. He carried out all her instructions, exactly as she had said. These words inspire terror. They are supreme in increasing energy. When a king is exhausted from the depredations of an enemy, an adviser should recount them. This history is known as 'Jaya'.[314] It should be heard by one who wishes for victory. Having heard it, he will swiftly conquer the earth and oppress the enemies. This[315] leads to the birth of a son. This leads to the birth of a brave son. If a pregnant woman repeatedly hears it, she is certain to give birth to a warrior who will be learned, valiant, austere, brave, self-controlled and an ascetic, radiant with the prosperity of brahmanas, honoured in the words of the virtuous, resplendent, strong, immensely fortunate, a maharatha, daring,

unassailable, victorious and invincible. He will chastise those who are evil and protect those who act in accordance with dharma. The kshatriya lady will give birth to such a brave son, for whom his truth will be his valour."'

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'Kunti said, "O Keshava! Tell Arjuna this. 'When you were born, I was seated in the maternity chamber, surrounded by women from the hermitage. A voice was then heard from the sky. It was divine in form and pleasant to hear. "O Kunti! This son of yours will be the equal of the one with a thousand eyes.[316] In a battle, he will vanquish all the assembled Kurus. With Bhimasena as his second, he will overturn the world. Your son will be the conqueror of the earth and his fame will touch heaven. With Vasudeva as his ally, he will kill the Kurus in the field of battle. He will regain the paternal share that had been lost. Together with his brothers, the illustrious one will perform three horse sacrifices."' O Achyuta! If I know Bibhatsu Savyasachi, who is devoted to the truth, it must be as it was spoken. I know that he is strong and unassailable. O Dasharha! It must therefore be as the voice had spoken. O Varshneya! If there is any dharma, it must truly be that way. O Krishna! You will also bring about everything. I do not doubt the truth of what the voice had spoken. I bow down before the great dharma. It is dharma that sustains living beings. Speak these words to Dhananjaya.

'"Speak these words to Vrikodara, who is always ready. 'The time for which a kshatriya lady gives birth has arrived. Those who are bulls among men do not waver when an enmity surfaces.' You have always known about Bhima's intelligence. That destroyer of enemies cannot be pacified until the enemy has been destroyed.

'"O Krishna! O Madhava! Speak these words to the fortunate and illustrious Krishna,[317] learned in all forms of dharma and daughter-in-law of the great-souled Pandu. 'O immensely fortunate one! O one born in a noble lineage! O illustrious one! You have always behaved towards all my sons as is appropriate and as one should behave.'

'"Speak to the two sons of Madri, both of whom are devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas. 'Choose the enjoyments that can be gained through valour over life itself.' O Purushottama! If a man lives according to the dharma of kshatriyas, he is always delighted at prosperity that is gained through valour. It was while you looked on that Panchali, who was devoted to every kind of dharma, was harshly addressed. It is not proper for you to forgive that. The unhappiness from the loss of the kingdom, the defeat at the game of dice and the banishment of my sons was nothing compared to the unhappiness when that large, dark and weeping lady was brought to the assembly hall and made to listen to harsh words. In my view, that was a greater misery. The one with the beautiful thighs has always been devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas. She was following the dharma of women then.[318] Though she has protectors, at that time,

Krishna[319] obtained no protectors there.

'"O Krishna! O mighty-armed one! Tell this to Arjuna, tiger among men, supreme among those who wield all weapons. 'Follow the path indicated by Droupadi.' You know that when Bhima and Arjuna are enraged, they are like two Yamas and can convey even the gods to the final destination. Both were insulted when Krishna[320] was brought to the assembly hall and Duhshasana addressed terrible and harsh words towards her, while all the brave Kurus looked on. Remind him about that again. Ask about the welfare of the Pandavas and Krishna and her sons. O Janardana! Also tell them that I am extremely well. Travel along a safe path and protect my sons."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Mighty-armed Krishna saluted and circumambulated her. Then he strode out, like a lion in his gait. He granted leave to Bhishma and the other bulls among the Kurus.[321] He made Karna[322] ascend his chariot and left with Satyaki. When Dasharha had left, all the Kurus assembled together and talked about the great and extraordinary wonders that had occurred in connection with Keshava. They said, "The entire earth is confounded and has been snared in the noose of death. It will be destroyed because of Duryodhana's stupidity." Purushottama left the city and talked for a long time with Karna. Having given Radheya permission to leave, the delight of all the Yadavas goaded his horses towards a great speed. Urged by Daruka, the horses seemed to drink up the sky and dashed with the speed of the mind and the wind. Having covered a great distance like swift kites, the horses, bearing the wielder of the Sharnga bow, reached Upaplavya while the sun was still high in the sky.'

799(136)

Vaishampayana said, 'After listening to Kunti's words, maharatha Bhishma and Drona spoke these words to Duryodhana, who was beyond control. "O tiger among men! You have heard the words Kunti spoke in Krishna's presence. They are foremost and full of meaning. They are in conformity with supreme dharma. With Vasudeva's approval, the Kounteyas will act accordingly. O Kourava! They will not be pacified without the kingdom. You oppressed the Parthas and Droupadi in the assembly hall. But they were then restrained by the noose of dharma and had to tolerate it. However, Arjuna, skilled in the use of weapons, and Bhima, firm in his resolution, and Gandiva, the two quivers,[323] the chariot and the standard, Yudhishthira and Vasudeva as the ally, will no longer forgive. O mighty-armed one! Earlier, you have yourself witnessed how the intelligent Partha vanquished everyone in battle, in the city of Virata. The nivatakavacha danavas, terrible in their deeds, were burnt in battle with his *roudra* weapon, the weapon with flames. Karna and the others and you yourself with your armour and chariot, were freed at the time of the expedition of the cattle. This is sufficient proof. O foremost among Bharatas! Make peace with your brothers, the Pandavas. Save this entire earth, which is headed towards the jaws of death. Your elder

brother's[324] conduct is in accordance with dharma. He is affectionate. He is gentle in speech. He is pure. Get rid of these evil intentions and go to that tiger among men. If the Pandava sees that you have laid down your bow, the illustrious one will smoothen his brows and bring peace to our lineage. Having gone to him with your advisers, embrace that son of a king. O destroyer of enemies! Honour the king, as you used to do earlier. Let Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, Bhima's elder brother, embrace you in his arms with affection when you greet him. Bhima is supreme among warriors. He has shoulders, thighs and arms like a lion and his arms are round and large. Let him embrace you with those arms. Kunti's son, Gudakesha Partha Dhananjaya, has a neck like a lion and eyes like lotuses. Let him salute you. The sons of the two Ashvins are tigers among men and are unmatched in their beauty on earth. Let them affectionately honour you, as they would for an elder. Let these kings, with Dasharha at the forefront, release tears of joy. O king! Having discarded your vanity, be united with your brothers. Together with your brothers, rule the entire earth. Having happily embraced each other, let these kings return. O Indra among kings! Refrain from war. Listen to the reasons of your well-wishers. In the case of a war, the certain destruction of the kshatriyas can be seen. The stars are against us. Birds and animals are behaving in a terrible way. Flaming meteors are seen to descend on your army. O lord of the earth! Our mounts are miserable and seem to be weeping. Vultures are circling our soldiers in every direction. The city and the king's residence no longer seem to be as they used to be before. The directions are blazing and jackals are inauspiciously howling in every direction. Listen to the words of your father and mother and of your well-wishers. O mighty-armed one! Peace or war depends on you. O destroyer of enemies! If you do not heed the advice of your well-wishers, you will see your soldiers oppressed by Partha's arrows. You will hear Bhima's loud roars and see his strength in battle. On hearing these and Gandiva's roar, you will remember my[325] words. If you do not find my words to be acceptable, all of this will come to pass."'

800(137)

Vaishampayana said, 'Having been thus addressed, he[326] was distracted. He glanced sideways and lowered his face. He furrowed the middle of his brows and did not say anything. On seeing him thus distracted, those bulls among men[327] glanced at each other and spoke these words to the one who had not replied.

'Bhishma said, "Partha[328] is devoted. He is devoid of jealousy. He possesses the qualities of a brahmana. He is devoted to the truth. What can be greater misery than having to fight with him?"

'Drona said, "O king! Dhananjaya is dearer to me than my own son Ashvatthama. The one with the ape on his standard[329] shows more reverence towards others than anyone else. If I have to fight with Dhananjaya, whom I love more than my own son, as a result

of following the dharma of kshatriyas, shame on the life of kshatriyas. Because of my favours, there is no other archer in the world who is equal or superior to Bibhatsu as an archer. One who betrays his friends, one who is wicked in his sentiments, one who is an atheist, one who is dishonest and one who is deceitful, does not obtain worship from the virtuous, like an idiot who has arrived at a sacrifice. Though restrained from evil, an evil-souled one desires evil. Though tempted by evil, a person who is pure in soul desires purity. Though they have been treated with falsehood, they still remain affectionately inclined. O supreme among Bharatas! But your taints will lead to a bad end. You have been addressed by the eldest among the Kurus, by me, by Vidura and also by Vasudeva. But you do not see what is beneficial. 'I have the forces.' Thinking this, you wish to cross over. That is like crossing the Ganga, with its crocodiles, alligators ands sharks,[330] during the rainy season. You think that you are now dressed in Yudhishthira's garments. But because of your avarice, you have only obtained the prosperity that he has cast away, like a garland. Even in the forest, together with Droupadi, Partha Pandava[331] enjoys a kingdom,[332] surrounded by his brothers, who wield weapons. Who can outlive him? When he met Ilavila's son,[333] whom all the kings serve as servants, Dharmaraja surpassed him in radiance. He obtained gems in Kubera's abode. Desiring the kingdom, the Pandavas are ready to invade your prosperous kingdom. We[334] have offered gifts. We have offered oblations. We have studied. We have satisfied the brahmanas with riches. We have lived our lives. Both of us know that we have accomplished our tasks. But you are discarding happiness, the kingdom, friends and riches. You wish to wage war on the Pandavas. But you will confront a great calamity. Droupadi, the one who is truthful in her conduct, desires their victory. That goddess is terrible in her austerities and vows. How can you defeat the Pandava? Janardana is his adviser and Dhananjaya, foremost among those who wield all weapons, is his brother. Brahmanas who have fortitude and have controlled their senses, are his companions. He is brave and terrible in his austerities. How can you defeat the Pandava? I am telling you again, as a well-wisher who desires to save the life of a well-wisher who is immersing himself in an ocean of disaster. Refrain from this war with those brave ones. Have peace with them, so that the Kurus can prosper. With your sons, advisers and forces, do not advance towards defeat."'

Section Fifty-Five

Karna-Upanivada Parva

This section has 351 shlokas and eleven chapters.

Chapter 801(138): 28 shlokas
Chapter 802(139): 57 shlokas
Chapter 803(140): 20 shlokas
Chapter 804(141): 49 shlokas
Chapter 805(142): 30 shlokas
Chapter 806(143): 12 shlokas
Chapter 807(144): 26 shlokas
Chapter 808(145): 40 shlokas
Chapter 809(146): 35 shlokas
Chapter 810(147): 35 shlokas
Chapter 811(148): 19 shlokas

Nivada *is an invitation and* upa *has the connotation of secret. This section is in the nature of a secret invitation to Karna. Both Krishna and Kunti try to wean Karna away, but fail.*

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'Dhritarashtra said, "O Sanjaya! Before Madhusudana left, surrounded by the princes and the advisers, he instructed Karna to ascend the chariot. What did the destroyer of enemy warriors tell Radheya on the chariot? What comforting words did Govinda tell the son of a suta? Krishna speaks in a voice that roars like a flood or a cloud. O Sanjaya! Whether it was mildly, or whether it was sharply, what did he tell Karna?"

'Sanjaya replied, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Listen to what Madhusudana, whose soul cannot be measured, told Radheya. I will recount the words in their entirety, both sharp and mild. They were pleasant and in conformity with dharma. They were truthful and beneficial. They were acceptable to the heart.

'"Vasudeva said, 'O Radheya! You have served brahmanas who are learned in the Vedas. Free of jealousy and attentively, you have asked them about the truth. O Karna! You know the eternal teachings of the Vedas. You know about the sacred texts of dharma and their subtleties. People who know about the sacred texts say that a son who is born to a maiden before her marriage is as much of a son as one who is born from a father after marriage. O Karna! You have been born in this fashion.[1] According to dharma, you are Pandu's son. According to the instructions of the sacred texts of dharma, come with me and you will become a king. The Parthas are on your father's side and the Vrishnis are on your mother's side. O bull among men! Know that both these sides are your own lineage. O son![2] Come with me now and the Pandavas will

recognize you as a Kounteya who has been born before Yudhishthira. The five Pandavas will grasp your feet as brothers, together with the five sons of Droupadi and Subhadra's unvanquished son.[3] The kings and princes who have gathered together in the cause of the Pandavas and all the Andhakas and Vrishnis will grasp your feet. The kings, the wives of kings and the daughters of kings will bring gold, silver and earthen vessels, herbs, all kinds of seeds, all kinds of gems and creepers for your anointment.[4] At the sixth point in time,[5] Droupadi will have intercourse with you. Let the brahmanas who are acquainted with the four Vedas consecrate you today, assisted by the priest of the Pandavas,[6] the five Pandava brothers who are bulls among men, Droupadi's five sons, the Panchalas and the Chedis. You will be seated on the skin of a tiger. I will myself instate you as king and the lord of the earth. Kunti's son, King Yudhishthira, will be the heir apparent. Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, rigid in his vows and with dharma in his soul, will ascend the chariot behind you and hold a white umbrella.[7] O Kounteya! The immensely strong Bhimasena will hold a giant white umbrella above your head when you are consecrated. Your chariot will have hundreds of bells that make a noise and will be strewn with the skins of tigers. It will be yoked to white horses and Arjuna will drive it. Abhimanyu, Nakula, Sahadeva and Droupadi's five sons will always be stationed near, for your instructions. The Panchalas and maharatha Shikhandi will follow you. I will myself follow you and so will all the Andhakas, Vrishnis and Dasharhas. O lord of the earth! The Dasharhas will be part of your family. O mighty-armed one! Enjoy the kingdom, together with your Pandava brothers. Practise meditation. Offer oblations. Observe other auspicious signs. Let the Dravidas, together with the Kuntalas, follow you, with the Andhras, Talachakras, Chuchupas and Venupas. Let bards and minstrels sing your praises in many ways. Let the Pandavas proclaim Vasushena's[8] triumph. O Kounteya! Surrounded by the Parthas, like the moon is by the nakshatras, rule over the kingdom and delight Kunti. Let your friends rejoice and let your enemies suffer. Today, let there be fraternity between you and your Pandava brothers.'"'

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'"Karna said, 'O Keshava! I have no doubt that you are affectionately speaking to me as a well-wisher. O Varshneya! As a friend, you wish for my welfare. I also know everything about my being Pandu's son under the norms of dharma. O Krishna! These are the instructions of the sacred texts of dharma, as you have interpreted them. O Janardana! As a maiden, she conceived me in her womb through the sun. Once I was born, she abandoned me on the instructions of the sun. O Krishna! I was born in this way, Pandu's son under the norms of dharma. However, Kunti did not think of my welfare and cast me out as one undesired. As soon as he saw me, the suta Adhiratha took me home. O Madhusudana! Out of affection towards me, he gave me to Radha.[9] Out of affection towards me, milk flowed from Radha's breasts. O Madhava! She

accepted my urine and my excrement. How can someone like me ignore the ancestral oblations that are due to her? I am learned in dharma. I have always devoted myself to listening to the sacred texts of dharma. Suta Adhiratha thinks of me as a son. Out of affection towards him, I have always thought of him as a father. O Madhava! O Janardana! Out of affection towards his son, he had my birth rites performed, in accordance with the prescriptions of the sacred texts. He got the brahmanas to name me Vasushena. O Keshava! When I attained youth, he had me married to wives. O Janardana! I have given birth to sons and grandsons through them. O Krishna! My heart is tied with bonds of affection to them. O Govinda! The entire earth, masses of gold, delight and fear cannot incite me to be false towards these. O Krishna! In Dhritarashtra's lineage, I have obtained refuge with Duryodhana. I have enjoyed a kingdom for thirteen years, without any thorns. I have offered oblations and performed many sacrifices, but in the company of sutas. I have issued invitations and undertaken matrimonial alliances, but in the company of sutas. O Krishna! O Varshneya! On obtaining me on his side, Duryodhana has raised his weapons and is ready for war with the Pandavas. O Achyuta! Therefore, I have been confidently chosen as the supreme warrior to counter Savyasachi in a duel with chariots. O Janardana! I cannot be false to Dhritarashtra's intelligent son because of death, bondage, fear or greed. O Hrishikesha! If I do not fight with Savyasachi now in a duel with chariots, that will bring ill fame to both me and Partha.

""'O Madhusudana! There is no doubt that you have spoken with my welfare in mind. There is no doubt that all the Pandavas will act in accordance with your instructions. O Purushottama! You should not reveal this conversation between us. O descendant of the Yadava lineage! I think that this will be in everyone's interests. If the king who has dharma in his soul and is rigid in his vows[10] knows that I am Kunti's first son, he will not accept the kingdom. O Madhusudana! O destroyer of enemies! Even if I obtain this large and prosperous kingdom, I will hand it over to Duryodhana. Yudhishthira has dharma in his soul. He has Hrishikesha as a leader and Dhananjaya as a warrior. May he be the king forever. O Madhava! Maharatha Bhima, Nakula, Sahadeva, Droupadi's sons, Uttamouja, Yudhamanyu, Satyadharma, Somaki, Chaidya, Chekitana, the unvanquished Shikhandi, the Kekaya brothers who have the complexions of fireflies, maharatha Kuntibhoja who has the complexion of a rainbow,[11] Bhimasena's maternal uncle, maharatha Senajit and Virata's son Shankha are on his side. The earth and the kingdom will be his. O Janardana! You are his treasury. O Krishna! This large assemblage of kshatriyas has been brought together. This resplendent kingdom, famous among all the kings, has already been won.[12] O Varshneya! Dhirtarashtra's son will undertake a sacrifice with weapons. O Janardana! You will be the one who will witness this sacrifice. O Krishna! When the sacrifice is performed, you will be the *adhvaryu*.[13] Bibhatsu, with the ape on his banner, will gird himself as the *hotar*. Gandiva will be the

ladle. The valour of men will be the clarified butter. Unleashed by Savyasachi, *aindra*, *pashupata*, *brahma* and *sthunakarna*[14] will be mantras. Matching his father in valour and even surpassing him, Subhadra's son will be the *gravastotra.*[15] Yet again, the immensely strong Bhima, the tiger among men whose roars in the field of battle destroy an army of elephants, will be the udgatar and *prastota*.[16] The eternal King Yudhishthira has dharma in his soul. He knows about incantations and oblations and about the brahman. O Madhusudana! The sound of the conchshells, drums and kettledrums, resounding like roaring lions, will be the *subrahmanya*.[17] Nakula and Sahadeva, Madri's two illustrious and extremely valiant sons, will be the *shamitar*s.[18] O Govinda! The chariots will have spotted flagpoles and will be stocked with spotless spears. O Janardana! These will be the sacrificial poles at the sacrifice. Shafted arrows, hollow arrows, iron arrows, arrows with heads like the teeth of calves and javelins will be the pots of soma. The bows will be the strainers.[19] The swords will be broken fragments from the jars. The heads will be the sacrificial cakes. O Krishna! Blood will be the oblations offered at this sacrifice. Maces, lances and unblemished clubs will be the kindling. The pupils of Drona and Sharadvata Kripa will be the superintending priests.[20] The arrows unleashed by the wielder of the Gandiva, by maharathas and by Drona and Drona's son, will be the ladles. Satyaki will be the *pratiprasthanika*.[21] Dhritarashtra will be the performer of the sacrifice and the great army will be the wife.[22] O mighty-armed one! When this *atiratra*[23] sacrifice is observed, the immensely strong Ghatotkacha will be the shamitar. O Krishna! Because he was born from a fire, the powerful Dhrishtadyumna will be the dakshina at the sacrifice when oblations[24] are offered.

"''O Krishna! I regret the harsh words I used against the Pandavas to please Dhritarashtra's son. I am now tormented by that deed. O Krishna! When you see me killed by Savyasachi, that will be the *punashchiti*[25] of their sacrifice. When Pandava[26] roars loudly and drinks Duhshasana's blood, that will be the drinking of soma. O Janardana! When the two from Panchala[27] bring down Drona and Bhishma, that will be the conclusion of the sacrifice. O Madhava! When the immensely strong Bhimasena kills Duryodhana, that will signify the end of Dhritarashtra's sacrifice. O Keshava! Dhritarashtra's daughters-in-law and granddaughters-in-law will gather together, their lords killed, their sons killed, their protectors killed. O Janardana! Together with Gandhari, they will weep at the sacrificial site, frequented by dogs, vultures and ospreys. That will be like the bath after the sacrifice. O Madhusudana! O bull among kshatriyas! These kshatriyas are aged in learning and aged in years. Because of your doings, let them not have a fruitless death.[28] O Keshava! Let this entire circle of kshatriyas meet their death through weapons in Kurukshetra, the most sacred spot in the three worlds. O Pundarikaksha! O Varshneya! Therefore, channel your desires so that all the kshatriyas can ascend to heaven. O Janardana! As long as the mountains are there and as long as the rivers flow, the eternal fame of this deed shall resound till then. The

brahmanas will speak about the great battle of Bharata.[29] O Varshneya! In gatherings, they will proclaim the glory of the kshatriyas. O Keshava! Bring Kounteya here, to fight with me. O scorcher of enemies! Always keep this conversation between us secret.'"'

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'Sanjaya said, "Having heard Karna's words, Keshava, the destroyer of enemy warriors, smiled. He then laughed and spoke these words. 'O Karna! Are you not tempted by the offer of a kingdom? Do you not desire to rule the earth that I will give to you? The victory of the Pandavas is certain. There is no scope for any doubt on that score. The triumphal banner of the Pandavas can be seen, with the terrible king of the apes perched at the top. It was constructed by Bhouvana with divine maya. It has been raised, as radiant as Indra's banner. Many terrible and divine beings can be seen on it, evoking fear. It is not obstructed by mountains and forests. It has been raised up diagonally and is one yojana tall. O Karna! Dhananjaya's radiant flag has been raised and is equal to the fire in its form. When you see the one with the white horses in battle, with Krishna as the charioteer, using the weapons of Indra, Agni and the Maruts and hear the roar of Gandiva, as forceful as thunder, there will no longer be treta, krita or dvapara. When you see Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, in battle, protecting his great army with incantations and oblations, as unassailable as Aditya and tormenting the soldiers of the enemy, there will no longer be treta, krita or dvapara. When you see the immensely strong Bhimasena in the field of battle, dancing in the battle and drinking Duhshasana's blood, like a rutting elephant that has slain a challenging tusker, there will no longer be treta, krita or dvapara. When you see Madri's maharatha sons in battle, routing the army of Dhritarashtra's son like two elephants, shattering the chariots of enemy warriors and engaged in hurling weapons, there will no longer be treta, krita or dvapara. When you see Drona, Shantanu's son and Kripa in battle, with King Suyodhana and Jayadratha of Sindhu fiercely dashing to attack and restrained by Savyasachi, there will no longer be treta, krita or dvapara. O Karna! Depart from here and tell Drona, Shantanu's son and Kripa this. This is a pleasant month, with food and fuel easily obtained. The herbs and forests are ripe and prosperous now. The trees are full of fruit and with few flies. There is no mud. The water is tasty. It is not warm, nor is it cold. The time is pleasant. It will be the new moon[30] seven days from now. Let the fight begin on that day, because that is said to be Shakra's day. Also tell all the kings who have assembled to do battle. "I will accomplish everything that you wish for." The kings and the princes who are following Duryodhana will be killed through weapons and attain the supreme goal.'"'

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'Sanjaya said, "On hearing these auspicious and beneficial words from Keshava, Karna

honoured Krishna Madhusudana[31] and spoke these words. 'O mighty-armed one! Knowing everything, why did you wish to confuse me? The destruction of the entire earth is imminent. Shakuni, Duhshasana and Dhritarashtra's son, King Duryodhana, and I are responsible. O Krishna! There is no doubt that there will be a great and terrible war between the Pandavas and the Kurus, with the mud of blood. The kings and the princes who follow Duryodhana's instructions will be burnt in the battle with the flames of weapons and will go to Yama's abode. O Madhusudana! Many terrible dreams are seen. There are fearful portents and extremely terrible omens. They signify the defeat of Dhritarashtra's son and Yudhishthira's victory. O Varshneya! There are many signs and they make the body hair stand up. The sharp and extremely radiant planet Shanaishchara[32] is oppressing the nakshatra Prajapatya,[33] implying greater suffering for all beings. O Madhusudana! Angaraka[34] is retrograde in Jyeshtha and is aspiring for Anuradha, as if seeking its friendship.[35] O Krishna! O Varshneya! A great calamity confronts the Kurus, in particular because the planet is oppressing Chitra.[36] The signs on the moon are distorted and Rahu is obstructing the sun. Meteors are showering down from heaven. There are storms and earthquakes. The elephants are trumpeting. O Madhava! The horses are shedding tears and no longer find pleasure in fodder and water. O mighty-armed one! When such omens are seen, it is said that a great calamity is at hand and that it will be the terrible destruction of beings. O Keshava! It is seen that though horses, elephants and men are eating little, they are releasing large quantities of excrement. O Madhusudana! The learned ones have said that these are the signs of the defeat of the entire army of Dhritarashtra's son. O Krishna! It is said that the mounts of the Pandavas are happy. The animals are circumambulating them from the right and that is a sign of their victory. O Keshava! But all the animals are circumambulating Dhritarashtra's son from the left. Invisible voices can be heard and these are signs of his defeat. Peacocks, *pushpashakunas*,[37] swans, cranes, chatakas and masses of *jivamjivakas*[38] follow the Pandavas. Vultures, crows, *badas*,[39] hawks, *yatudhanas*, jackals and masses of flies follow the Kouravas. There is no sound of drums in the army of Dhritarashtra's son. But even when they are not struck, the drums of the Pandavas are making a sound. The wells in the army of Dhritarashtra's son are making a sound like that of cows and bulls. That is a sign of his defeat. O Madhava! The gods are showering down flesh and blood. A radiant city of the gandharvas has appeared. It has walls, moats, turrets and beautiful gates. At dawn and at dusk, a black mace can be seen to envelope the sun. This signifies a great calamity. A jackal is howling terribly and that is a sign of his[40] defeat. Terrible birds with black necks hang around. Then they fly away towards the dusk, a sign of his defeat. O Madhusudana! He first hates the brahmanas, then his elders and his faithful servants. That is a sign of his defeat. The eastern direction is red. The southern direction has the complexion of weapons. O Madhusudana! The western direction looks like an unbaked vessel. O Madhava! For Dhritarashtra's son, all the directions are on fire. These

signs that are seen presage a great calamity. O Achyuta! I had a dream in which I saw a palace with a thousand pillars. I saw Yudhishthira, together with his brothers, ascending this. All of them were seen to wear white headdresses and white garments. I saw all of them seated on beautiful seats. O Krishna! O Janardana! I saw you in that dream, draping the earth, strewn with blood, with entrails. The infinitely energetic Yudhishthira ascended a heap of bones. He happily ate ghee mixed with *payasa*[41] from a golden vessel. I saw Yudhishthira swallow the earth, which you had given him. It is evident he will enjoy the earth. Vrikodara, terrible in his deeds, ascended a mountain. That tiger among men held a club in his hand and seemed to be eyeing the earth. This clearly shows that he will kill us in a great battle. O Hrishikesha! I know that where dharma exists, victory exists there. O Hrishikesha! Together with you, Dhananjaya held the Gandiva and mounted a white elephant.[42] He shone in supreme radiance. O Krishna! There is no doubt that you will slaughter all the kings, with Duryodhana in the forefront, in battle. Nakula, Sahadeva and maharatha Satyaki were adorned in white bracelets and necklaces and wore white garlands and garments. Those tigers among men ascended excellent vehicles that were drawn by men. Those three great ones had white umbrellas and garments. O Janardana! O Keshava! I saw three from the army of Dhritarashtra's son too, wearing white headdresses. You know who they are—Ashvatthama, Kripa and Satvata Kritavarma. O Madhava! All the other kings were seen with red headdresses.[43] O mighty-armed one! O Janardana! Ascended on a vehicle drawn by camels, Bhishma and Drona, together with me and Dhritarashtra's son, headed in the direction ruled by Agastya.[44] O Janardana! In a short while, we reached Yama's abode. There is no doubt that I and the other kings, and the circle of kshatriyas, will enter Gandiva's fire.'

'"Krishna replied, 'O Karna! The destruction of the earth is now near, since your heart does not find my words to be acceptable. O son![45] The destruction of all beings is imminent. That which is wrong appears to be right and is not removed from the heart.'

'"Karna said, 'O Krishna! O mighty-armed one! If we remain alive, we may perhaps see you again after this great battle, which will lead to the destruction of all the brave kshatriyas. O Krishna! Otherwise, we will certainly meet in heaven. O unblemished one! Now it seems that we will only meet there again.'"

'Sanjaya said, "Saying this, Karna embraced Madhava tightly. Having obtained Keshava's permission, he descended from the chariot. Having ascended his own chariot, decorated with gold, Radheya returned with us,[46] dejected in his mind. Together with Satyaki, Keshava then left at a greater speed, repeatedly urging his charioteer, 'Go! Go!'"'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Krishna's entreaties having failed, he left the Kurus and went

towards the Pandavas. Kshatta went to Pritha and in a soft and sorrowful tone, spoke these words. "O one whose sons are alive! You know that I am always inclined towards kindness. Though I have raised my voice, Suyodhana has not accepted my words. King Yudhishthira has the Chedis, Panchalas, Kekayas, Bhima, Arjuna, Krishna, Yuyudhana[47] and the twins on his side. Desiring dharma, he has camped in Upaplavya. Though he is strong, desiring friendship with his kin, he acts like one who is weak. King Dhritarashtra is aged in his years, but does not seek peace. Intoxicated by the insolence of his son, he is walking along the path of adharma. The dissension has arisen because of the evil intelligence of Jayadratha, Karna, Duhshasana and Soubala. Using adharma, in this fashion, they robbed the kingdom from one who follows dharma. But in this way, dharma's consequences bind one down. Who will not suffer from fever when the Kurus forcibly oppress dharma in this way? Keshava has left without obtaining peace and the Pandavas will prepare for war. Thus, the bad policy followed by the Kurus will lead to the destruction of warriors. I think about this and cannot sleep, during the day and at night." Kunti heard these words, spoken by one who desired welfare. She began to sigh in grief and her mind was also distressed.

'She thought, "Shame on artha! It is because of this that there will be this great carnage of relatives. There can only be defeat in this war among friends. If the assembled Pandavas, Chedis, Panchalas and Yadavas fight the Bharatas, what can be greater misery than that? I can see that there is a certain taint associated with war, but it is also there in the case of defeat in war. For those who are without riches, it is better to die. But there cannot be a victory in the destruction of relatives. The grandfather, Shantanu's son, the preceptor who is foremost among warriors and Karna are with Dhritarashtra's son and that increases my fears. The preceptor Drona will never willingly wish to fight with his disciples. Why should the grandfather not be kindly disposed towards the Pandavas? This leaves only one[48] who unnecessarily follows the evil-minded son of Dhritarashtra. Because of his evil delusions, he has always hated the Pandavas. He is immensely strong in his resolution and he is also powerful. Karna has always been against the Pandavas and I am now tormented by that. Today, I hope to turn Karna's mind towards the Pandavas. I will meet him, tell him the truth and seek to obtain his favours. Satisfied, the illustrious Durvasa granted me a boon. When I dwelt in the inner quarters of my father, King Kuntibhoja's abode, I was honoured by the ability of summoning the gods. With a trembling heart, I thought about this in many ways, about the strength and weakness of the mantra and about the brahmana's boon. Because of the nature of a woman, who also possessed childish sentiments, I thought about this repeatedly, though I was protected by a trusted nurse and surrounded by friends. How could I avoid taints and how could I preserve my father's reputation? How could I do something good for myself, without committing a sin? Thinking about that brahmana and bowing down before him, I was overcome by curiosity and behaved like a child.

Though I was still a maiden, I summoned the sun god to me. Though I was a virgin, I conceived him in my womb. He was protected like my son. Why should he not listen to my words, which will be beneficial for the cause of his brothers?"

'Thinking in this fashion, Kunti decided on an excellent course of action.[49] So as to bring success to her objective, she went towards the Bhagirathi. On the banks of the Ganga, Pritha heard the sounds of incantations, being recited by her compassionate and truthful son. He was facing the east, with his hands raised up. The ascetic lady waited behind him, until the meditations were over. She was the daughter of a Kourava and descended from the Vrishni lineage. She stood there, behind Karna's upper garments,[50] oppressed by the sun, like a garland of lotuses that has dried. He was rigid in his vows and meditated until his back was heated by the sun. When he turned around, he saw Kunti and joined his hands in salutation. As was appropriate, the immensely energetic one, who was supreme among those who upheld dharma, honoured her.'

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'Karna said, "I am Karna, the son of Radha and Adhiratha, and I salute you. Tell me. Why have you come here? What can I do for you?"

'Kunti replied, "You are the son of Kunti, not of Radha. And Adhiratha is not your father. O Karna! You have not been born in a lineage of sutas. Know these words of mine to be true. While I was still a maiden, I gave birth to you. In Kuntibhoja's abode, you were the first one I carried in my womb. O Partha! You are my son. The duty of the god Tapana Virochana[51] is to produce light. O Karna, supreme among those who wield weapons! He gave birth to you through me. You were born with earrings and armour. You were born as the son of a god, surrounded in radiance. You were born as my invincible son, in my father's house. Because of your ignorance, you do not know your true brothers. Since you are my son, you should not serve the sons of Dhritarashtra. O son! It is the determination of dharma that the fruits of dharma accrue to men who satisfy their fathers, or their one-eyed mother.[52] Earlier, Arjuna earned prosperity for Yudhishthira and the sons of Dhritarashtra robbed it because of their greed. Separate yourself from them and enjoy it. Today, let the Kurus witness the fraternal union between Karna and Arjuna. Let those who are evil bow down. Let Karna and Arjuna be like Rama[53] and Janardana. If the two of you are united in your minds, what can you not achieve in this world? O Karna! Surrounded by your five brothers, you will shine, like Brahma surrounded by the Vedas and the five Vedangas.[54] You have all the qualities. You are the eldest and the best among all the relatives. The words 'son of a suta' will no longer be used for you. You will be a valiant Partha."'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Then Karna heard a voice that issued from the sun. It was spoken

affectionately like a father and came from the sun god himself. "O Karna! Pritha has spoken the truth. Act in accordance with your mother's words. O tiger among men! You will obtain the greatest benefit, if you act entirely in accordance with her words." Thus addressed by his mother, and by his father, the sun god himself, Karna's resolution did not falter, because he was always established in the truth.

'Karna said, "O kshatriya lady! It is not that I disbelieve the words spoken by you, or contradict that acting in accordance with your words is the gate to dharma. But your action towards me was extremely evil. By casting me out, you have destroyed the fame and renown that I could have possessed. I have been born a kshatriya, but I did not obtain the rites that were due to a kshatriya. All this was because of you. What wicked enemy could have done anything worse? You showed me no compassion at the time when it was required. You deprived me of my rites. But you are now asking me to act. Earlier, you have never sought my welfare as a mother. However, desiring your own welfare alone, you have now come to me and are addressing me. Who does not suffer when Dhananjaya is aided by Krishna? If I now go over to the Parthas, who will not think that I am frightened? I have not been known as their brother before. This has been revealed at the time of the battle. If I go to the Pandavas, who will speak of me as a kshatriya? The sons of Dhritarashtra have given me a share in every object of desire. They have honoured me and given me every kind of happiness. How can I act counter to that now? They have always served me and have always bowed down before me, like the Vasus before Vasava. They now confront a feud with an enemy. They think that with my life, they can withstand the enemies. How can I act against the desire that is there in their minds? Using me as a boat, they wish to cross over to the other shore of this shoreless and impassable war. How can I abandon them? For those who have earned a living from the sons of Dhritarashtra, the time has arrived. I must devote myself to that task, even if there is a risk to my life. There are those who are satiated and treated well. But when the time arrives for a task, these wicked ones are ungrateful and act counter to what should be done. They are faithless towards the king. They are servants who steal the ancestral offerings of their master. These evil-acting ones do not obtain this world, or the next. In the cause of Dhritarashtra's son, I will fight with your sons. I will use all my strength and my power. I will not lie to you. I will seek to abide by the conduct of a non-violent and truthful person. But even if they are beneficial, I will not act in accordance with your words now. However, your appeal to me will not be fruitless. Though I can counter and kill them, I will not kill all of your sons in battle—Yudhishthira, Bhima and the twins, everyone other than Arjuna. In Yudhishthira's army, I will fight with Arjuna. Having killed Arjuna in battle, I will obtain fruits. Or I will be killed by Savyasachi and attain fame. O illustrious one! The number of your sons will not be less than five. You will either be without Arjuna and with Karna, or if I am killed, you will be with Arjuna."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having heard Karna's words, Kunti trembled with grief. She embraced her son Karna, who was firm because of his fortitude, and said, "It must be this way then. O Karna! The Kouravas will go to their destruction, as you have said. Destiny is extremely powerful. O destroyer of enemies! But you must promise me about the safety of four of your brothers. You have given me that pledge and you must discharge that promise. May you be safe and in good health." Pritha spoke these words to Karna. Delighted, Karna honoured her. Then, both of them left in different directions.'

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Vaishampayana said, 'Having returned to Upaplavya from Hastinapura, Keshava, the destroyer of enemies, told the Pandavas everything that had happened. They spoke to each other for a long time and held repeated consultations. So as to rest, Shouri went to his own residence. After having taken their leave of all the kings, headed by Virata, when the sun had set, the five Pandava brothers performed their evening prayers. Then their minds turned towards Krishna and they had Dasharha brought for more consultations.

'Yudhishthira asked, "O Pundarikaksha! When you went to Nagapura,[55] what did you tell Dhritarashtra's son in the assembly hall? You should tell us that."

'Vasudeva replied, "When I went to Nagapura, what I told Dhritarashtra's son in the assembly hall was true, healthy and beneficial. But the evil-minded one did not accept it."

'Yudhishthira said, "O Hrishikesha! Duryodhana cannot be controlled. When he deviated from the proper path, what did the grandfather, senior among the Kurus, tell him? What did the mighty-armed preceptor, Bharadvaja, say? What about our younger father, Kshatta, supreme among those who uphold dharma? Tormented over his sons,[56] what did he tell Dhritarashtra's son? What did all the kings who were in the assembly hall have to say? O Janardana! Tell us everything, exactly as it happened. You have already told us all the words spoken by the two foremost among the Kurus[57] to the wicked one who is overcome by desire and avarice and thinks himself to be wise. O Keshava! But unpleasant things do not remain in my heart. O Govinda! O illustrious one! I wish to hear their words. O son![58] Act so that time does not pass. O Krishna! You are our refuge. You are our protector. You are our preceptor."

'Vasudeva replied, "O king! O Indra among kings! Listen to the words that King Suyodhana spoke to me in the midst of that assembly of the Kurus. After I had spoken my words, Dhritarashtra's son laughed. Then Bhishma was extremely enraged and spoke these words. 'O Duryodhana! Listen to my words, for the sake of the welfare of the lineage. O tiger among kings! Having heard my words, act in the interests of your own lineage. O son![59] My father was King Shantanu, famous in the worlds. I was the only son of someone who was the best among all those who had sons. He began to think,

"How can I have a second son? The learned ones say that having a single son is like having no son at all. How can my lineage not be destroyed? How can the fame continue to be extended?" Having got to know about his desire, I brought him Kali[60] as my mother. For the sake of my father and my lineage, I took an extremely difficult oath that I would not be a king and would hold up my semen.[61] This is known to you. I have cheerfully lived here, abiding by my promise. O king! Through her was born my younger brother Vichitravirya, with dharma in his soul. He was mighty-armed and prosperous and an extender of the Kuru lineage. When my father ascended to heaven, I instated him in my kingdom as a king. I myself behaved like a servant who was inferior to him. O Indra among kings! After defeating an array of kings, I brought him appropriate wives. You have heard about this many times. I then confronted Rama in a duel.[62] Because of fear of Rama, the citizens banished him from the city.[63] Because of excessive addiction to his wives, he was soon afflicted by pulmonary disease. Without a king, the lord of the gods no longer rained down on the kingdom. The subjects suffered from hunger and fear and came and spoke to me.

""'The subjects said, "All the subjects are decaying. For the sake of our welfare, become our king. O fortunate one! O extender of Shantanu's lineage! Dispel these calamities. All your subjects are suffering from an extremely terrible disease. O Gangeya![64] Only a few ones are left. You should save us. O brave one! Dispel this disease. As is dharma, protect the subjects. When you are yourself alive, do not let this kingdom head towards destruction."'

"'Bhishma said, 'The lamentations of the subjects failed to move my heart. I remembered that adherence to an oath is virtuous conduct. O great king! The citizens, my fortunate mother Kali, the servants, the priests, the preceptors and the extremely learned brahmanas were greatly distressed and kept urging me, "Be our king. The kingdom protected by Pratipa[65] is being destroyed. O immensely intelligent one! For the sake of our welfare, be our king." At these words, I joined my hands in salutation. I was unhappy and extremely miserable. O son! I kept repeatedly telling them about the oath I had taken to honour my father and for the sake of the lineage, that I would hold up my semen and would not be a king. O king! Then I joined my hands in salutation and repeatedly told my mother, "O mother! I have been born from Shantanu and will extend the Kuru lineage. It was for your sake that I took the oath and I cannot falsify it. Even for your sake, do not impose this burden on me. O one who is devoted to her sons! O mother! I am your servant, awaiting your command." O great king! Having thus entreated my mother and the subjects, together with my mother, for the sake of my brother's wives, I solicited the great sage Vyasa and sought the rishi's favours for the sake of offspring. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! He showed us his favours and begot three sons.[66] Being blind and deprived of the rites, your father could not be a king. Thus, the great-souled Pandu, famous in the world, became a king. Since he was a

king, his sons are the inheritors of their father's share. O son![67] Do not quarrel over this. Give them half of the kingdom. As long as I am alive, which man can rule the kingdom? Do not slight my words. I have always desired peace. O son! O king! I do not differentiate between them and you. These are also the views of your father, Gandhari and Vidura. The words of the elders should be heard. Do not ignore my words. Otherwise, you will destroy everybody, yourself and the earth also.'"'

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'Vasudeva said, "After Bhishma had spoken, Drona, who was capable of speaking, addressed these words to Duryodhana, in the midst of the kings. 'O fortunate one! O son![68] Just as Pratipa's son, Shantanu, was established for the welfare of the lineage, Devavrata Bhishma is also established for the welfare of the lineage. Pandu, the lord of men, was also like that. He was truthful and in control of his senses. He became the king of the Kurus. He had dharma in his soul. He was good in his vows and was extremely controlled. Later, the extender of the Kuru lineage gave the kingdom to his elder, the intelligent Dhritarashtra, and to the younger, Kshatta. O king! O Kouravya! O unblemished one! After having established the one without decay[69] on the kingdom, he left for the forest with his wife. Vidura, tiger among men, humbly accepted a position that was inferior to him[70] and served him, like one fanning him with a whisk. O son![71] In the appropriate way, all the subjects accepted Dhritarashtra as the lord of men, just as they had accepted Pandu, lord of men. After having handed over the kingdom to Dhritarashtra and Vidura, Pandu, the destroyer of enemy cities, roamed around the entire earth. Vidura, devoted to the truth, was in charge of building up the treasury, gifts, the superintendence of the servants and everyone's subsistence. Bhishma, the immensely energetic conqueror of enemy cities, was in charge of peace and war and the care of the king. While he was on the throne, the immensely strong King Dhritarashtra was always followed by the great-souled Vidura. Having been born in this lineage, how can you decide to break up the lineage? O lord of men! Together with your brothers, enjoy all the objects of desire. I am not saying this out of any weakness, or for any riches. O supreme among kings! I eat what Bhishma gives me, not what you give. O lord of men! I do not wish to draw my sustenance from you. Drona goes where Bhishma goes. Do what Bhishma has asked you to. O destroyer of enemies! Give the sons of Pandu half of the kingdom. O son![72] I have always behaved equally as a teacher to both you and them. The one with the white horses[73] is the same to me as Ashvatthama. What is the need to speak a lot? Where there is dharma, victory is there.' O great king! The infinitely energetic Drona spoke in this way.

'"Then Vidura, devoted to the truth and knowledgeable about dharma, glanced towards his father's[74] face and spoke these words. 'O Devavrata! Listen to the words that I am going to speak. This lineage of the Kouravas was destroyed[75] and you made it

rise up again. Therefore, when I am lamenting, do not ignore my words. Who is the one named Duryodhana, born in this lineage? He is a defiler of the lineage. He is overcome by greed and you are following his inclination. He does not behave like an arya. He is ungrateful. He has lost his senses because of avarice. His father can see dharma and artha, but he acts contrary to his instructions. The Kurus will be destroyed because of Duryodhana's deeds. O great king! Act so that the destruction does not occur. O immensely radiant one! Earlier, you created me and Dhritarashtra, like a painter fashions a painting. Do not destroy us now. O mighty-armed one! Do not look at this destruction of the lineage and ignore it, like Prajapati, who creates beings in order to destroy them. With the destruction imminent, if your intelligence has failed you, leave for the forest, with me and Dhritarashtra. Or swiftly bind down the wicked and stupid son of Dhritarashtra, who is extremely evil in his intelligence. Let the kingdom now be protected by the Pandavas. O tiger among kings! Show your favours. A great destruction of the Pandavas, the Kurus and the infinitely energetic kings can be seen.' Having spoken in this way, Vidura, distressed in his mind, stopped. He was immersed in his thoughts and sighed repeatedly. Then King Subala's daughter,[76] scared for the lineage, angrily spoke words full of dharma and artha to her evil-minded and violent son Duryodhana, while all the kings looked on. 'Let the kings who have entered the king's assembly hall, the brahmarshis and the courtiers listen while I speak about your crimes and those of your evil advisers and followers. This kingdom of the Kurus is ruled through a continuous process of succession. That is the dharma of the lineage, as it has come down to us. With your wicked intelligence and violent deeds, you wish to cause injury to the kingdom of the Kurus. The intelligent Dhritarashtra is established in the kingdom, with his younger brother, the far-sighted Vidura. O Duryodhana! Because of your delusion and desiring to be king, how can you cross both of them? As long as Bhishma is there, the king and the greatly fortunate Kshatta are subservient to him. Since he[77] knows about dharma, the great-souled son of the river does not desire to be a king of men. The kingdom inalienably belonged to Pandu. His sons should now rule, and no one else. This entire kingdom belongs to the Pandavas, because it has descended to them from their ancestors and they will leave it to their sons and grandsons. The intelligent Devavrata is devoted to the truth. He is great-souled and is foremost among the Kurus. We must accept everything that he has said about dharma. We must act according to our own dharma. Let us follow the one whose vow is great.[78] Let the king and Vidura speak. Let us act in accordance with what our well-wishers say. For a very long time, let us hold dharma up in front. Yudhishthira, the son of Dharma, should rule. He has rightfully obtained the kingdom of the Kurus. This has been instructed by King Dhritarashtra and Shantanu's son has said that this is the most important.'"'

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‘Vasudeva said, “O lord of men! When Gandhari had spoken thus, Dhritarashtra, lord of men, spoke to Duryodhana in the midst of the kings. ‘O Duryodhana! O son! O fortunate one! Listen to what I am going to tell you and act accordingly, if you wish to respect your father. Soma Prajapati[79] extended the lineage of the Kurus at the beginning. Nahusha’s son, Yayati, was sixth in the line from Soma. He had five sons, all supreme among rajarshis. The illustrious and immensely energetic Yadu was the eldest. Puru was younger than him and he extended our lineage. He was born from Sharmishtha, the daughter of Vrishaparva. O foremost among the Bharatas! Yadu was the son of Devayani and was the maternal grandson of the infinitely energetic Kavya Shukra.[80] The ancestor of the Yadavas[81] was powerful and was honoured for his valour. But because he was full of insolence and extremely evil-minded, he insulted the kshatriyas.[82] Because he was deluded by his strength and insolence, he did not follow the instructions of his father. The unvanquished one insulted his father and brothers. Yadu was the strongest one in the four corners of the earth. Having subjugated all the kings, he lived in Nagasahrya.[83] His father, Nahusha’s son, Yayati, was enraged. O Gandhari’s son! He cursed him and threw him out of the kingdom. Yayati also angrily cursed his other sons, the brothers who were insolent because of their strength. The best of kings then instated his youngest son, Puru, in the kingdom and he remained devoted to him.[84] Thus, if he is insolent, an eldest son can be deprived of the kingdom. If he serves his seniors, even a youngest one can obtain the kingdom. My father’s grandfather, Pratipa, knew everything about dharma. He was a lord of the earth who was famous in the three worlds. That lion among kings ruled the kingdom in accordance with dharma. Three sons were born to him. They were famous and were like the gods in form. Devapi was the eldest and Bahlika came next. O son! The intelligent Shantanu, my grandfather, was the third. Devapi was supreme among kings and greatly energetic. He was devoted to dharma, truthful and served his father. He was revered by the citizens of the town and the country. He was honoured by the virtuous. He was loved by everyone, the young and the aged. He was generous and devoted to the truth. He was engaged in the welfare of all beings. He obeyed the instructions of his father and also those of the brahmanas. He was the beloved brother of Bahlika and the great-souled Shantanu. Those great-souled ones were extremely fraternal towards each other. However, Devapi possessed a disease of the skin. In due course of time, the aged and best of kings made arrangements for a consecration, in accordance with the sacred texts. The illustrious one performed all the auspicious rites. But all the brahmanas and the elders, together with the citizens of the town and the country, restrained him from consecrating Devapi. When the king heard about the prevention of the instatement, his voice choked with tears. The king sorrowed over his son. He[85] was generous, learned about dharma and devoted to the truth. He was loved by the subjects. However, he was tainted by a disease of the skin. The gods do not approve of a lord of the earth who is inferior in his limbs. Because of

this, that best among kings was restrained by those bulls among brahmanas. On seeing that he[86] was distressed and was sorrowing over his son, and died because of this, Devapi resorted to the forest. Bahlika also gave up the kingdom and went to his maternal uncle's lineage. He abandoned his father and brothers and obtained another prosperous city instead. O king! On Bahlika's instructions, after his father had died, Shantanu, famous in the world, became the king and ruled the kingdom. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In the same way, I was the eldest, but was deficient in a limb.[87] After a great deal of reflection, the intelligent Pandu barred me from the kingdom. Though he was younger to me, Pandu obtained the kingdom as a king. O destroyer of enemies! On his death, the kingdom belongs to his sons. If I could not obtain the kingdom, how can you desire the kingdom? This kingdom rightfully belongs to the great-souled Prince Yudhishthira. With his great qualities, he will be the protector of the lineage of the Kouravas. He is truthful. He is never distracted. He abides by the sacred texts. He is loved by his friends and is virtuous. He is loved by the subjects and is kind towards his well-wishers. He has mastered his senses and is the protector of righteous ones. Forgiveness, patience, control, uprightness, truthfulness to vows, learning, single-mindedness, compassion towards beings and control—Yudhishthira has all these qualities of a king. You are not the son of a king and you are not an arya in your conduct. You are always greedy and evil-minded towards your friends. You are insolent. How can you hope to seize a kingdom that, according to the line of succession, belongs to another? Devoid of your delusion, give them half of the kingdom, with the vehicles and the attendants. O Indra among men! The remainder will be enough for you to obtain a living, together with your younger brothers.'"'

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'Vasudeva said, "Having been thus addressed by Bhishma, Drona, Vidura, Gandhari and Dhritarashtra, the evil one was not brought to his senses. Not understanding, he angrily arose, his eyes red with rage. Wishing to give up their lives, the kings rushed after him. The king[88] repeatedly instructed the kings, who were bereft of their senses. 'Go to Kurukshetra. It is Pushya today.'[89] Driven by destiny, having made Bhishma the general, together with their soldiers, those lords of the earth then cheerfully left. Those lords of the earth have assembled eleven akshouhinis of soldiers. Bhishma is at the forefront, with a palm tree on his standard.

'"O lord of the earth! Therefore, do what is appropriate under the circumstances. O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I have repeated the words that were spoken in my presence by Bhishma, Drona, Vidura, Gandhari and Dhritarashtra in the assembly of the Kurus. O king! Hoping for fraternity, I first used conciliation, to prevent dissension in the lineage of the Kurus and ensure the welfare of the subjects. When I saw that peace was not acceptable, I resorted to alienation and recounted your deeds, divine

and human. When I saw that Suyodhana ignored my words of conciliation, I assembled all the kings and tried to sow seeds of dissension. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O lord! I showed them extraordinary and terrible manifestations and superhuman exploits. I censured the kings. I denigrated Suyodhana. I repeatedly tried to frighten Radheya and Soubala. I repeatedly recounted the meanness of the sons of Dhritarashtra. Through eloquence and counsel, I tried to create disunity among the kings. Using conciliation again, I spoke to them about gifts, so that a division could be created in the lineage of the Kurus and I could be successful in my objective. I said, 'The children, all the Pandavas, will abandon their pride and seek refuge with Dhritarashtra, Bhishma and Vidura. Let them give the kingdom to you and let them not remain as lords. Let it be as the king,[90] Gangeya and Vidura have said. Let the entire kingdom be yours, only give up five villages. O supreme among kings! Surely your father can sustain them.' Having been spoken to in this way, the evil-minded one was not ready to change his views. For that wicked one, I can see no other means but the fourth one of chastisement.[91] Those lords of the earth have marched out to Kurukshetra, to their perdition. I have told you everything that occurred in the assembly of the Kurus. O Pandava! They will not give up the kingdom without a war. All of them are headed for destruction and are confronting death."'

Section Fifty-Six

Abhiniryana Parva

This section has 169 shlokas and four chapters.

Chapter 812(149): 84 shlokas
Chapter 813(150): 27 shlokas
Chapter 814(151): 27 shlokas
Chapter 815(152): 31 shlokas

Abhiniryana *means the act of marching out. The two sides march out to Kurukshetra.*

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Vaishampayana said, 'Dharmaraja Yudhishthira heard these words of Janardana. In Keshava's presence, the one with dharma in his soul then spoke to his brothers. "You have heard what transpired in the assembly hall, in the assembly of the Kurus. You have also thought about everything that Keshava has said. O supreme among men! Therefore, divide my soldiers now. Seven akshouhinis have assembled together for victory. Listen to the names of seven generals when I recount their names—Drupada, Virata, Dhrishtadyumna, Shikhandi, Satyaki, Chekitana and the valorous Bhimasena. All these generals are warriors who are ready to lay down their lives. All of them are learned in the Vedas and are brave. All of them possess good conduct and are devoted to their vows. All of them are humble and know about policy. They are skilled in the art of war. They are skilled in the use of arrows and are capable of fighting with all weapons. One who will lead all seven armies must know about army formations. He must be able to withstand Bhishma, who is like a fire with flames as arrows, on the field of battle. O Sahadeva! O descendant of the Kuru lineage! O tiger among men! You tell me first. Who is capable of being our general?"

'Sahadeva replied, "He has been with us in our times of unhappiness. He is a valiant king. He is conversant with dharma and resorts to it. We resorted to him to obtain our share. Powerful Matsya Virata is skilled in the use of weapons and is unassailable in battle. He can withstand Bhishma and those maharathas in the field of battle."'

Vaishampayana said, 'When Sahadeva, eloquent in the use of words, had spoken these words, Nakula followed with these words. "He stands out in age, learning, fortitude, birth in a noble lineage, humility and greatness of family. He is illustrious and skilled in the use of all weapons. He learnt the use of weapons from Bharadvaja.[1] He is unassailable and is devoted to the truth. He has always rivalled Drona and the immensely strong Bhishma. He is a general who prides himself on being foremost in the

arrays of kings. He is surrounded by sons and grandsons, like a tree with one hundred branches. In anger, together with his wife, this lord of the earth performed terrible austerities for Drona's destruction. He is brave and adorns any assembly. That bull among kings has always supported us like a father. Our father-in-law Drupada should be at the head of our army. He will be able to withstand both Bhishma and Drona. That is my view. O king! This king knows about divine weapons and he is a friend of Angiras."[2]

'When Madri's two sons had spoken, Vasava's son Savyasachi, the descendant of the Kuru lineage, who was like Vasava himself, spoke these words. "He arose through the power of austerities and by satisfying the rishi.[3] He is immensely strong and is a divine person. He is like the fire in his complexion. He bore a bow and a sword. He was clad in armour. The spirited one was ascended on a chariot that was yoked to celestial horses. He arose from the bed of fire. The valiant one's chariot roared like a gigantic cloud. The brave one is capable of withstanding a lion and he is like a lion in his valour. He has the sinews of a lion. He is mighty-armed. He has the chest of a lion. He is immensely strong. The brave one roars like a lion. He has the shoulders of a lion. He is immensely radiant. He has excellent brows. He has excellent teeth. He has an excellent chin. He has excellent arms. He has an excellent face and he is not thin. He has excellent clavicles. He has extremely large eyes. He has excellent feet. He has an excellent stance. Like a rutting elephant, he cannot be penetrated by any weapon. He has been born for Drona's destruction. He is truthful and a master of his senses. I think that Dhrishtadyumna can withstand Bhishma's weapons, which are like the lightning in their touch and are like serpents with flaming jaws. Like the fire, they descend with the force of Yama's messengers. They are like the terrible vajra in their impact and Rama[4] himself confronted them once in battle. I do not see a man who can withstand the one with the great vow,[5] with the exception of Dhrishtadyumna. O king! That is my view. He is swift in the use of his hands. He is a colourful warrior. It is my view that he should be our general. He is handsome and wears impenetrable armour. He is like an elephant that leads the herd."

'Bhima said, "Shikhandi, Drupada's son, has been born to kill him.[6] O Indra among kings! This is what the assembled Siddhas and rishis said. When he uses divine weapons in the midst of battle, men gaze at his form, as if he is the great-souled Rama.[7] O king! When there is a fight, I do not see anyone who can pierce Shikhandi with a weapon in battle, when he is armoured and is astride his chariot. O king! In a duel, no one other than Shikhandi can withstand Bhishma, who is great in his vows. I think that this brave one should be our general."

'Yudhishthira said, "O sons![8] The substance and lack of substance of everything in the universe[9] and the strengths and weaknesses of everything, past and future, are known to Keshava, who has dharma in his soul. Whoever Dasharha Krishna names should be our general, regardless of whether he is skilled in the use of weapons or not, regardless

of whether he is aged or old. O sons![10] He is the root, whether it is our victory, or our disaster. Our lives, our kingdom, our successes, our failures, our happiness and our unhappiness are vested in him. He is the one who has created and he is the one who has placed.[11] Our success is based on him. Whoever is named by Dasharha Krishna should be the general of our army. Let the one who is foremost among speakers speak, because the night is passing. Having appointed a general under Krishna's instructions, when the rest of the night has passed, we will march out to the field of battle, anointing our weapons with fragrances[12] and performing auspicious ceremonies."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having heard Dharmaraja's intelligent words, Pundarikaksha glanced towards Dhananjaya and said, "O great king! It is also my opinion that the powerful and valiant warriors who have been named as possible generals of the army are all capable and can crush the enemy. In a great war, they will generate fear in Indra, not to speak of the avaricious sons of Dhritarashtra, evil in their intelligence. O mighty-armed one! O destroyer of enemies! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! To please you, I have made great efforts to bring about peace. We have paid off our debt to dharma and we can't be blamed by those who wish to do that. That childish son of Dhritarashtra thinks himself to be wise and thinks that he has become successful because of his strength. He thinks that we are weak. It is best to arrange your army. I think that they can only be persuaded through death. Dhritarashtra's sons will not be capable of standing up when they see Dhananjaya, an enraged Bhimasena, the twins who are like Yama and the intolerant Dhrishtadyumna, seconded by Yuyudhana, Abhimanyu, Droupadi's sons, Virata, Drupada, the leaders of the akshouhinis and the Indras among men who are firm in their valour. Our armies have substance. They are invincible. They are unassailable. There is no doubt that we kill the forces of Dhritarashtra's son in battle." When Krishna had spoken in this way, those best of men were delighted in their hearts and a great roar arose from them, "Get it yoked!" The soldiers swiftly rushed around.

'There were the sounds of horses and elephants and the roar of wheels in every direction. There was the tumultuous sound of conch shells and drums in every direction. When the Pandavas marched out with their soldiers on every side, the unassailable army looked like the overflowing Ganga. Bhimasena and Madri's armoured sons were at the front of the army. Subhadra's son, Droupadi's sons, Parshata Dhrishtadyumna, the Prabhadrakas and the Panchalas followed Bhimasena. The sound that arose was like the ocean at the time of the full moon. The delighted soldiers roared as they proceeded and seemed to touch the heaven. The armed forces were happy and were capable of penetrating the ranks of the enemy. Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, advanced in their midst. Wagons, carts for vending, brothel houses, caravans, treasure chests, war machines, armouries, physicians, doctors, the invalids in the army and the thin and weak troops and the attendants were gathered together by the king and advanced. The truthful

Panchali Droupadi remained in Upaplavya with the women, surrounded by servant maids and servants. Pandu's sons advanced after leaving stationary and mobile troops behind to guard their base camp. They also left large defensive columns. O king! They proceeded while distributing cows and gold to the brahmanas who gathered around and praised them, as they rode on chariots decorated with gems. The Kekayas, Dhrishtaketu, the lordly son of the king of Kashi, Shreniman, Vasudana and the unvanquished Shikhandi were cheerful and satisfied. They were armoured and held weapons. They were adorned in ornaments. All of them surrounded and followed King Yudhishthira. Virata, Yajnasena of Somaka,[13] Sudharma, Kuntibhoja, Dhrishtadyumna's sons, forty thousand chariots, five times that number of horses, ten times that number of infantry and sixty thousand riders were at the back. Anadhrishti, Chekitana, the king of Chedi and Satyaki—all these surrounded Vasudeva and Dhananjaya and marched. They reached Kurukshetra, armed and arrayed in battle formations. The Pandavas seemed to be like roaring bulls. On entering Kurukshetra, those destroyers of enemies blew on their conch shells. In similar fashion, Vasudeva and Dhananjaya also sounded their conch shells. When they heard the resounding roar of Panchajanya,[14] which was like the roar of thunder, all the soldiers rejoiced. The sound of conch shells and drums mingled with the leonine roars of those swift ones and echoed on earth, in the sky and among the oceans.

'There was a spot that was plain and pleasant, with plenty of fodder and fuel. King Yudhishthira made the army set up camp there, avoiding cremation grounds, sanctuaries of gods, hermitages of rishis and places of pilgrimage. This was an agreeable region, without any salinity. It was pure and auspicious. Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, the lord of the earth, made arrangements for a camp there. When the exhausted mounts had rested, he cheerfully advanced again, surrounded by hundreds and thousands of kings. Wandering around in every direction, Partha and Keshava drove away hundreds of platoons from the army of Dhritarashtra's son. Parshata Dhrishtadyumna and the powerful charioteer Yuyudhana Satyaki measured out the camp.[15] This reached up to the sacred river Hiranvati in Kurukshetra. It was easy to cross there. The water was pure and was free from stones and mud. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Keshava had a moat dug up there. For the sake of protection, he instructed that a platoon of troops should be posted there. In the appropriate way, Keshava also instructed that hundreds and thousands of camps should be erected for the other lords among men, along the lines of those for the great-souled Pandavas. They had an abundance of water and kindling there and they were unassailable. They were stocked with items of consumption, food, grain and drink. There were separate and expensive camps for those kings. O Indra among kings! They looked like vimanas that had descended on the surface of the earth. Hundreds of wise artisans, who were paid wages, were employed there and there were extremely skilled physicians, with every kind of requirement. King

Yudhishthira ensured that strings of bows, bows, armour, weapons, honey, clarified butter, mountainous heaps of resin[16] and sand, plenty of water and fodder, chaff and charcoal were made available to every camp. There were giant machines used in war, iron arrows, javelins, swords, battle axes, bows and armour to be worn by the men on their chests. There were elephants clad in armour, with spikes attached to them. They looked like mountains and each was capable of fighting a hundred thousand warriors. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On learning that the Pandavas had set up their camp there, their friends arrived at that spot, with their soldiers and their mounts. They had observed brahmacharya. They had drunk soma. They had given away large quantities of dakshina. Those lords of the earth now assembled for the victory of the sons of Pandu.'

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Janamejaya said, 'Yudhishthira advanced with his soldiers, with a desire to fight and, protected by Vasudeva, set up camp in Kurukshetra. He was followed by Virata and Drupada with their sons, and surrounded by hundreds of kings, like the great Indra, protected by maharatha Adityas. On hearing this, what did King Duryodhana do? O one rich in austerities! I wish to hear this in detail. On that terrible occasion, what transpired in Kurujangala? Even the army of the gods would have trembled to fight those who gathered there—the Pandavas, Vasudeva, Virata, Drupada, Dhrishtadyumna from Panchala, maharatha Shikhandi and valorous Yuyudhana, unassailable even to the gods. O one rich in austerities! I wish to hear all this in detail, about what the Kurus and the Pandavas did.'

Vaishampayana said, 'When Dasharha had left, King Duryodhana spoke to Karna, Duhshasana and Shakuni. "Adhokshaja[17] was unsuccessful and has returned to the Parthas. There is no doubt that he will speak to them in anger. Vasudeva desires war between the Pandavas and me. Bhima and Arjuna will adhere to his desires. Ajatashatru will follow Bhima and Arjuna. I have acted badly towards him and his brothers in the past. Virata and Drupada have had an enmity towards me. Those two leaders of armies will also follow Vasudeva. There will be a terrible war that will make the body hair stand up. Therefore, with great attention, let us make all the arrangements for war. Let the lords of the earth set up hundreds and thousands of camps in Kurukshetra. They should be spacious and spaced so that the enemy cannot attack them. Water and kindling should be available nearby. The roads should be such that supplies can be carried. There must be stores of treasure. Let them be stocked with many kinds of weapons and adorned with flags and banners. Let the roads emerging from the city be levelled. Let an announcement be made that we will march out tomorrow." They promised that they would act in that way and followed the instructions on the next day. The great-souled ones were delighted at the prospect of destroying the lords of the earth.[18] On hearing the king's instructions, all the kings were enraged and arose from

their expensive seats. They slowly touched their arms, which were like clubs and had golden armlets and were smeared with sandalwood and aloe. With hands like lotuses, they donned their headdresses and put on their lower and upper garments and ornaments. The foremost among charioteers tended to the chariots, those skilled in horses to the horses. Those who were skilled about elephants got the elephants ready. All of them prepared large quantities of colourful and golden armour and many different weapons. The foot soldiers took up many weapons and covered their bodies with colourful and golden armour. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The city of Dhritarashtra's son was festive. It was full of cheerful and agitated men. The crowd of men looked like an ocean. The chariots, elephants and horses were like fish. There was the roar of conch shells and drums. The stores of treasure were like jewels. The colourful ornaments were like waves. The spotless weapons were like foam. The palaces were like a garland of mountains. The roads and shops were like giant lakes. O king! That great ocean of the king of the Kurus was like the ocean, with the warriors looking like a rising moon.'

814(151)

Vaishampayana said, 'On remembering Vasudeva's words, Yudhishthira again asked Varshneya, "How did the wicked one speak? O Achyuta! At the present moment, what is the best course of action for us? How should we behave so that we do not stray from our own dharma? O Vasudeva! You know the intentions of Duryodhana, Karna, Shakuni Soubala and also that of my brothers and me. You have heard the words of both Vidura and Bhishma and you have heard everything that Kunti, great in her wisdom, wisely spoke. Reflect on all this again. O mighty-armed one! Reflect on all this and tell us unhesitatingly about our capacity." On hearing these words of Dharmaraja, in conformity with dharma and artha, Krishna spoke these words, in a voice that rumbled like a cloud or a drum. "I spoke beneficial words in conformity with dharma and artha. But for the Kouravya, deceit is wisdom and he did not listen. The one with the evil mind did not listen to Bhishma or Vidura, or to what I said. He ignored everything. He does not desire dharma. He does not desire fame. The evil-minded one resorts to Karna and thinks that he has won everything. Suyodhana even gave instructions for my capture. But the evil-souled one with a wicked resolution failed to accomplish his wishes. Bhishma and Drona did not speak what they should have. O one without decay! With the exception of Vidura, all of them follow him. Shakuni Soubala, Karna and Duhshasana are stupid and told the foolish one things about you that should not be said. What is the point of repeating everything that the Kouravas said? In brief, the evil-souled one treats you in a way that you do not deserve. In all the kings who constitute your army is there as much evil and as much lack of good as there is in him? We should not completely forsake our interests and seek peace with the Kouravas. Therefore, war

will follow." O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On hearing Vasudeva's words, all the kings were silent and looked towards the king's face. Yudhishthira understood the intentions of the lords of the earth. With Bhima, Arjuna and the twins, he gave the instructions that the yoking should be done.

'When the instructions for yoking were given, the soldiers were delighted. A joyous sound was heard in the army of the Pandavas. On seeing that those who should not be killed would be killed, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira sighed and told Bhimasena and Vijaya,[19] "I went to the forest and endured hardships to avoid an extreme calamity. But in spite of our efforts, it is upon us. Despite our making efforts, it is almost as if we had made no efforts. We have been unsuccessful in our attempts and great Kali[20] is upon us. How will we fight with those who should not be killed and accomplish our task? How will we kill our preceptors and elders? That cannot be victory." On hearing the words of Dharmaraja, Savyasachi, the scorcher of enemies, repeated to him the words that Vasudeva had spoken. "Devaki's son has conveyed the words of Kunti and Vidura. O king! You have understood them in their entirety. It is my firm view that they will not suggest anything that is adharma. O Kounteya! Therefore, we should not turn back without fighting." Vasudeva heard Savyasachi's words. He smiled and told Partha, "It is just as you have said." O great king! The Pandavyas then firmly made up their minds about the war. With their soldiers, they passed the night in comfort.'

815(152)

Vaishampayana said, 'O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When night had passed, King Duryodhana deployed his eleven akshouhinis. The lord of the earth divided all his men, elephants, chariots and horses into different battalions, depending on whether they were superior, average or inferior. There were axles,[21] quivers, fenders,[22] javelins, holders for arrows,[23] spears, cases for arrows,[24] assault poles,[25] standards, flags, javelins, many kinds of ropes, nooses, carpets, *kachagrahavikshepas*,[26] oil, molasses, sands, pots filled with poisonous snakes, resin, dirt, wooden spikes with bells, coverlets of tiger skins, coverlets of leopard skins, syringes,[27] horns, missiles,[28] different kinds of weapons, axes, spades, sesame oil, linseed oil and butter. With all these, the colourful form of the army blazed like fire. There were warriors clad in armour, firm in their knowledge of weapons. There were those who were born in noble lineages and knew about horses. They were engaged as charioteers. The chariots were stocked with herbs and minerals and were decorated with flags and banners. Each chariot was yoked to four horses and each was stocked with weapons and hundreds of bows. The horses were happy. One charioteer was in charge of the two horses in front, and another for the two horses at the side. They were foremost among charioteers and each charioteer knew about horses. Each was protected by a city and was incapable of being attacked by the enemy. There were thousands of chariots with seats and golden garlands. Like the

chariots, the elephants were decorated and stocked with minerals. There were seven men on each elephant, making it look like a mountain full of jewels. O king! There were two who held goads.[29] There were two who were excellent archers. There were two who were supreme in fighting with swords. One held a spear and the flag. O king! Kouravya's entire army was full of thousands of crazy elephants and all of them were stocked with weapons and stores of treasure. There were tens of thousands of horses clad in colourful armour. They bore ornaments and flags. They were trained well and controlled well. Each was harnessed in gold. There were hundreds and thousands of them, all controlled by the riders. There were the foot soldiers, with many different kinds of forms and nature. They had different kinds of armour and weapons. Those men were adorned with golden garlands.

'There were ten elephants for every chariot. There were ten horses for every elephant. There were ten foot soldiers for every horse, guarding its legs in every direction. For every chariot, fifty elephants were kept in reserve. For every elephant, there were one hundred horses. For every horse, there were seven men. A *sena*[30] consisted of five hundred elephants and the same number of chariots. Ten senas constituted a *pritana* and ten pritanas constituted a *vahini*. However, vahini, pritana, sena, *dhvajini, sadini, chamu,* akshouhini and *varuthini* are also used to mean the same thing. In this way, the battle formations of the intelligent Kourava numbered eleven akshouhinis, while the army of the Pandavas had seven akshouhinis. For men, five times fifty is said to constitute a *patti*. Three pattis constitute a *senamukha*, which is also known as a *gulma*. Ten gulmas make up a *gana* and there were tens of thousands of ganas in Duryodhana's army. These were armed ones who were eager to fight. The mighty-armed King Duryodhana examined many intelligent warriors and appointed those men as his *senapati*s.[31] In proper form and with honours, the best of men who were in charge of his separate akshouhinis were brought before him. These kings were consecrated—Kripa, Drona, Shalya, maharatha Saindhava,[32] Sudakshina from Kamboja, Kritavarma, Drona's son, Karna, Bhurishrava, Shakuni Soubala and maharatha Bahlika. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! From one day to another, and at different times of the day, he himself met them and gave them different kinds of instructions. All of them were instructed in this way. They, and the soldiers who followed them, were happy and wished to please the king and do what the king desired.'

Section Fifty-Seven

Bhishma-Abhishechana Parva

This section has 122 shlokas and four chapters.

Chapter 816(153): 35 shlokas
Chapter 817(154): 34 shlokas
Chapter 818(155): 38 shlokas
Chapter 819(156): 15 shlokas

Abhishechana *means the act of consecration, typically with sprinkling of water. This section is so named because it is about Bhishma being consecrated as the commander-in-chief on the Kourava side.*

816(153)

Vaishampayana said, 'Dhritarashtra's son joined his hands in salutation and spoke these words to Shantanu's son, Bhishma, accompanied by all the lords of the earth. "When there is a war, without a general, even a large army is destroyed like a nest of ants. The views of two leaders are rarely identical and they seek to rival each other in valour and fame. O immensely wise one! It is said that all the brahmanas once assembled together. They raised kusha grass as flags and attacked the infinitely energetic Haihayas. O grandfather! They were followed by the vaishyas and the shudras. The three varnas were on one side. On the other side, there were the bulls among the kshatriyas. In that war, the three varnas were repulsed again and again. Though the kshatriyas were alone, they triumphed over that giant army. O grandfather! The supreme among brahmanas asked the kshatriyas about this and the ones who knew about dharma told them about the precise reason. 'In war, we listen to a single one who is immensely intelligent. All of you separately follow your own inclinations.' Then the brahmanas made a single brahmana their general. He was brave and skilled in policy and they defeated the kshatriyas. Those who choose a single skilled and brave one, untainted and devoted to their welfare, as their general are victorious over the enemies in battle. You are the equal of Ushanas.[1] You have always been my well-wisher. You cannot be led astray. You are established in dharma. Become our general. You are like a sun to those who shine. You are like a moon to the herbs. You are like Kubera to the yakshas. You are like Vasava to the Maruts. You are like Meru to the mountains. You are like Suparna[2] to the birds. You are like Kumara[3] to the demons.[4] You are like the bearer of oblations[5] to the Vasus. When we are protected by you, like the residents of heaven are by Shakra, we will certainly be invincible, even to the thirty gods. You march in front of us, like the son of the fire[6] leads the gods. We will follow you, like cows follow a bull."

‘Bhishma replied, “O mighty-armed one! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is exactly as you say. However, you and the Pandavas are equal before me. O lord of men! I must speak about their welfare also. However, because I have pledged to do so, I must fight in your cause. I do not see any other warrior on earth who is my equal, with the exception of that tiger among men, Kunti’s son, Dhananjaya. He is mighty-armed. He knows all the divine weapons. However, Pandava will never fight me openly in the war. In an instant, through the strength of my weapons, I can make this entire universe destitute of men, gods, asuras and rakshasas. O lord of men! But Pandu’s sons cannot be slain by me. Therefore, I will always slay ten thousand warriors every day. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Unless they kill me first in an encounter, in this way, I will bring about their downfall. O king! There is one condition under which I will willingly become your general, not otherwise. You should hear about this. O lord of the earth! Let Karna or me fight first. This son of a suta always seeks to rival me in battle.”

‘Karna said, “O king! As long as Gangeya[7] is alive, I will never fight. I will fight with the one who wields the Gandiva only after Bhishma has been killed.”’

Vaishampayana said, ‘In the prescribed way, Dhritarashtra’s son then consecrated Bhishma, the giver of large quantities of dakshina, as the general and he blazed forth. On the king’s instructions, drums and conch shells were sounded in hundreds and thousands. Eager men played musical instruments. There were many types of roars like lions and the noise of mounts. A shower of blood and mud descended from the sky. There were storms and the earth trembled. There was the sound of elephants trumpeting. All this made the minds of all the warriors downcast. There were invisible voices. Meteors streaked through the sky. Jackals uttered fearful howls. The directions seemed to blaze. O king! When the king consecrated Gangeya as the general, there were terrible portents in hundreds. After consecrating Bhishma, the destroyer of enemy forces, as the general, he[8] made the foremost of brahmanas recite and gave them a lot of cattle and gold. Strengthened by their benedictions and surrounded by his soldiers, he placed the son of the water in the forefront and marched out with his brothers. With a large army, he went to Kurukshetra. With Karna, Kourava surveyed Kurushetra. O lord of men! He then set up camp in a level spot. This region was pleasant and without salinity. There was plenty of fodder and kindling. The camp was as radiant as Hastinapura itself.’

817(154)

Janamejaya said, ‘Bhishma, great in soul and son of the water, was supreme among those who wielded weapons. He was the grandfather of the Bharatas and was like a standard for the entire earth. He was Brihaspati’s equal in intelligence. He was the earth’s equal in forgiveness. He was the ocean’s equal in gravity. He was the equal of the Himalayas in steadfastness. He was like a Prajapati in generosity. He was like the

sun in energy. In destroying enemies with a shower of arrows, he was like the great Indra. He was consecrated in that terrible sacrifice of war, which made the body hair stand up, for many nights. On hearing this, what did mighty-armed King Yudhishthira, supreme among all wielders of weapons, say? What did Bhimasena, Arjuna and Krishna say?'

Vaishampayana replied, 'Yudhishthira was immensely intelligent and was skilled about dharma and artha to be followed in times of calamities. He summoned all his brothers and Satvata Vasudeva. The foremost among speakers spoke these comforting words. "Survey the army. Be attentive and armoured. Our first battle will be with the grandfather. Therefore, look for seven leaders for the army."[9]

'Vasudeva said, "O bull among the Bharata lineage! Now that the time has come, you have spoken what should be said. The words that you have spoken are appropriate. O mighty-armed one! What you have proposed as the next step appeals to me. Let us choose seven leaders for your army and consecrate them."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Then Yudhishthira summoned Drupada, Virata, the bull among the Shinis,[10] Dhrishtadyumna of Panchala, King Dhrishtaketu, Shikhandi of Panchala and Sahadeva of Magadha. These seven brave and great archers were delighted at the prospect of war. In the appropriate fashion, he consecrated them as the leaders of his army and Dhrishtadyumna as the overall general. He[11] arose from the fire for Drona's destruction. When all those great-souled ones were assembled together, Gudakesha Dhananjaya was made the lord of the generals. Sankarshana's[12] younger brother, the handsome and immensely intelligent Janardana, was made Arjuna's guide and the controller of his horses.

'On seeing that a great battle was imminent, the wielder of the plough[13] entered King Pandava's residence, in the company of Akrura and the others, Gada, Samba, Ulmuka and so on, with Rukmini's son[14] and Akrura's son led by Charudeshna. The mighty-armed one was protected by the foremost among the Vrishnis, who arrived like tigers intoxicated with their strength, like the Maruts protect Vasava. He was dressed in a blue silk garment and he was like the summit of Mount Kailasa. The illustrious one's gait was like that of a lion. His eyes were red with intoxication. On seeing him, Dharmaraja and the immensely radiant Keshava arose and so did Partha Vrikodara, the performer of terrible deeds, the wielder of the Gandiva, and all the other kings who were present there. All of them approached and worshipped the one who had the plough as a weapon. With Vasudeva leading the way, King Pandava grasped him by the hand and all of them welcomed him. The one with the plough as a weapon saluted Virata, Drupada and the elders. The destroyer of enemies then sat down with Yudhishthira.

'Rohini's son[15] glanced at Vasudeva. When all the kings were seated around him, he said, "There will be an extremely fearful and terrible slaughter of men. I think that this is certainly because of destiny and is incapable of being averted. When you emerge from

the battle with your well-wishers, I hope that I will see you again, without disease and without injuries on your bodies. There is no doubt that all the assembled kshatriya kings have been cooked by fate. There will be a great slaughter, with flesh, blood and mud. I repeatedly spoke to Vasudeva in private. 'O Madhusudana! Behave impartially towards your relatives. The Pandavas and King Duryodhana are the same to us. Therefore, if he wishes, you should help him again and again.' But because of you, Madhusudana did not act in accordance with my words. He has looked towards Dhananjaya and been devoted to you in every sentiment. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is my view that the victory of the Pandavas is certain, because that is what Vasudeva has decided. Without Krishna, I have no interest in looking at this world. Therefore, I have followed whatever Keshava desires. But both these brave ones, Bhima and King Duryodhana, skilled in fighting with clubs, are my students and are equal in my affection. Therefore, I will visit the sacred tirthas along the Sarasvati. I cannot remain indifferent to the destruction of the Kouravas." Having spoken this, the mighty-armed one took his leave of the Pandavas. Rama left to visit the tirthas, asking Madhusudana to return.'

818(155)

Vaishampayana said, 'At that time, the great-souled King Bhishmaka Hiranyalomna, who was a friend of Indra himself, arrived. He was the immensely famous lord of the Bhojas and Ahritis and was the lord of the southern region.[16] His son was famous in the world as Rukmi. The lion of the *kimpurusha*s lived on Gandhamadana and he became his student and learnt the entire science of war, with its four branches, from him.[17] The mighty-armed one obtained the great Indra's bow, which was divine and indestructible, and equal to Gandiva and Sharnga[18] in energy. Those who reside in heaven possess three divine bows—Varuna's Gandiva, the great Indra's bow Vijaya and Vishnu's Sharnga, which is said to be a celestial bow that is full of energy. Krishna wields it and strikes terror in the soldiers of enemies. The son of the chastiser of Paka[19] obtained Gandiva from the fire god in Khandava. The immensely energetic Rukmi obtained Vijaya from Druma. Hrishikesha obtained the supreme bow Sharnga after destroying the nooses of Mura, killing the energetic Mura, killing Naraka, the son of the earth, and obtaining sixteen thousand women and many jewels.[20]

'Rukmi obtained the bow Vijaya, which roared like a cloud and was capable of terrifying the universe. He came to the Pandavas. The brave one was insolent of the strength of his arms and had not forgiven the earlier instance of Rukmini being abducted by the intelligent Vasudeva. He had taken an oath that he would not return without killing Janardana. He had collected a giant army with four branches,[21] capable of attacking at a great distance. With this, he had pursued Varshneya, supreme among those who wield all weapons, wishing to kill him. It possessed many weapons and armour and was like the overflowing Ganga. He attacked Varshneya, the lord and

master of all yoga. O king! But he was repulsed and ashamed. He did not return to Kundina.[22] At the spot where the destroyer of enemy heroes was vanquished by Krishna in battle, he constructed a supreme city by the name of Bhojakata.[23] It had a large army and many horses and elephants. O king! This city is still famous on earth by the name of Bhojakata. Surrounded by a large army, the immensely valorous king of Bhoja came to the Pandavas with an akshouhini. He possessed armour, a sword, arrows, a bow, guards for his palms, a chariot and a flag that had the complexion of the sun. He entered that large camp of soldiers. When the Pandavyas got to know, to bring pleasure to Vasudeva, King Yudhishthira arose and honoured him. On being shown respect by the sons of Pandu and having received the appropriate homage, he saluted all of them in return. After he had rested with his soldiers, in the midst of those brave ones, he spoke to Kunti's son, Dhananjaya, "O Pandava! If you are afraid, I will stand as your aide on the field of battle. In the course of the war, I will help you so that your enemies will not be able to bear it. There is no man on this earth who is equal to me in valour. O Phalguna! When I have killed your enemies in battle, I will hand them over to you." Having been thus addressed in the presence of Dharmaraja and Keshava, in the hearing of all the kings of the earth and the others, the intelligent Kounteya glanced towards Vasudeva and Pandava Dharmaraja. He laughed and spoke in a tone of friendliness. "O brave one! At the time of the expedition with the cattle, I fought with the immensely powerful gandharvas. Who was my aide then and who was my friend then? I fought in the terrible battle of Khandava, infested by gods and danavas. Who was my aide then? I fought in a battle with the Nivatakavachas and the Kalakeya danavas. Who was my aide then? O son![24] I fought with many Kurus in the city of Virata. Who was my aide then? In battle, I am indebted to Rudra, Shakra, Vaishravana,[25] Yama, Varuna, the fire god, Kripa, Drona and Madhava. I firmly wield the divine bow Gandiva, full of energy. I possess inexhaustible quivers. I am sustained by divine weapons. I have been born in the lineage of the Kouravas. In particular, I am Pandu's son. I call myself Drona's student. Vasudeva is my aide. How can I cause ill fame to myself by saying that I am afraid? O tiger among men! I cannot speak such words to the wielder of the vajra himself. O mighty-armed one! I am not frightened. I do not need your help. Go wherever you wish to. Or remain here, if it so pleases you." Rukmi then returned with that army, which was like an ocean. O bull among the Bharata lineage! In a similar fashion, he approached Duryodhana. Arriving there, that lord of the earth spoke in the same way. But since he prided himself on his valour, he was rebuffed there too.[26]

'O great king! Thus, two of them withdrew from the war—the Varshneya who was Rohini's son and Rukmi, the lord of the earth. Rama went on a visit to the tirthas and after Bhishmaka's son had also departed, the Pandavas again seated themselves in consultations. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Frequented by all the kings, Dharmaraja's assembly looked like the firmament glittering with stars, with the moon

lording over it.’

819(156)

Janamejaya asked, ‘O bull among brahmanas! When the soldiers and battle formations had been marshalled in Kurukshetra, driven by destiny, what did the Kurus do?’

Vaishampayana said, ‘O bull among the Bharata lineage! The soldiers and battle formations were ready. O great king! Dhritarashtra spoke these words to Sanjaya. “O Sanjaya! Come and tell me everything and omit nothing, about the marshalling of soldiers in the armies of the Kurus and the Pandavas. I think that destiny is supreme and human endeavour amounts to nothing. I know about the taints and great destruction a war will give rise to. But I am not able to restrain my foolish son, who was deceitful in gambling with the dice. I am incapable of restraining him and ensuring my own self-interest. O suta! I have the intelligence to foresee these evils. But when I meet Duryodhana, my mind becomes perverse. O Sanjaya! That being the case, what is going to happen will occur. That apart, the revered dharma of a kshatriya is to give up his life in battle.”

‘Sanjaya said, “O great king! The question that you have posed is deserving of you. But it is not proper that you should lay the entire blame on Duryodhana. O king! Listen especially to what I have to say on this. If a man confronts a calamity because of his own evil deeds, he should not ascribe the fault to time or destiny. O great king! If a man commits every deed that is reprehensible, because of having committed those censurable crimes, he deserves to be killed by all the worlds. O foremost among men! When the Pandavas and their advisers were deceitfully defeated in the game of dice, they bore their hardships because of their respect for you. Hear from me about the slaughter that will happen in the course of the war of horses, elephants and infinitely energetic kings. O great king! Be steadfast when you hear about the destruction of all the worlds and the slaughter of all beings in the great war. Do not be distracted. A man is not the agent of his good or evil deeds. A man is like a wooden puppet on a string. Some are controlled by the great lord, others by the wishes of destiny, and still others because of their earlier deeds. These three different sources can be seen.”’

Section Fifty-Eight

Uluka-Yana Parva

This section has 101 shlokas and four chapters.

Chapter 820(157): 18 shlokas
Chapter 821(158): 41 shlokas
Chapter 822(159): 13 shlokas
Chapter 823(160): 29 shlokas

Yana *means moving or journey as a verb and conveyance as a noun. The parva is so named because Duryodhana sends Uluka as a messenger to the Pandavas.*

820(157)

'Sanjaya said, "O great king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O Indra among kings! O king! When the great-souled Pandavas were established along the Hiranvati, Duryodhana, together with Karna, Soubala and Duhshasana, summoned Uluka and secretly told him, 'O Uluka! O son of a gambler! Go to the Pandavas and the Somakas. In Vasudeva's hearing, go and tell them my words. "What has been thought of for many years has come to pass. There will be a war between the Pandavas and the Kurus, terrible to the worlds. O Kounteya![1] You spoke great and boastful words that Sanjaya recounted in the midst of the Kurus. The time has arrived. Carry out your pledge. Do everything that you promised. O Pandava! Remember the anger, the robbing of the kingdom, the exile to the forest and the molestation of Droupadi. Be a man. The purpose for which a kshatriya lady bears a son in her womb has arrived. Display your strength, valour, bravery, supreme dexterity in use of weapons and manliness in war and free yourself from your anger. Whose heart will not be shattered if he is dislodged from his prosperity for a long time? Who will not be oppressed and distressed? If a brave one is born in a noble lineage and desires the riches of others, how can his anger not be ignited, if his kingdom has been lost? Now act in accordance with the great words that you have uttered. The learned say that one who does not act is an evil man. There are two objectives behind a battle—the subjugation of enemies and the restoration of the kingdom. Therefore, act in accordance with your manliness. Defeat us and rule over the entire earth. Or be killed by us and go to the world of the brave. O Pandava! Remember the exile from the kingdom, the hardship of dwelling in the forest and Krishna's molestation. Be a man. Display your wrath to those who have used unpleasant words against you repeatedly, in the course of your wanderings. Wrath is manliness. O Partha! Be a man. Display your anger, strength, valour, knowledge, yoga and dexterity in the

use of weapons in battle.” O Uluka! On my behalf, speak these words to the foolish, ignorant and glutton eunuch Bhimasena. “O Vrikodara! Though impotent, you took an oath in the midst of the assembly hall. If you are capable, drink Duhshasana’s blood.” The weapons have been consecrated. Kurukshetra is free of mud. The horses have been fed and are fat. The soldiers have been paid. Tomorrow, together with Keshava, fight.’””[2]

821(158)

‘Sanjaya said, “The son of the gambler reached the spot where the soldiers of the Pandavas were encamped. He approached the Pandavyas and spoke to Yudhishthira, ‘You know about the words spoken by messengers and the words I speak are in accordance with the instructions of Duryodhana. Therefore, on hearing them, you should not be angry.’

‘“Yudhishthira replied, ‘O Uluka! Do not be afraid. Speak, without any anxiety. What are the thoughts of Dhritarashtra’s avaricious and short-sighted son?’”

‘Sanjaya said, “Then, in the midst of the radiant and great-souled Pandavas, all the Srinjayas, the famous Krishna, Drupada and his sons, Virata and all the other lords of the earth, he[3] spoke these words. ‘The great-souled king who is Dhritarashtra’s son has conveyed these words. O Yudhishthira! While the brave ones among the Kurus hear, listen to them. “You were defeated in a game of dice and Krishna was brought into the assembly hall. A man who prides himself on his manliness should be angered because of this. You were banished for twelve years in the forest, exiled from your hearth. You lived for another year as Virata’s servant. O Pandava! Be enraged at the robbing of the kingdom and your exile in the forest. Remember Droupadi’s molestation and be a man. O Pandava! Though impotent, Bhimasena took an oath. If he is capable, let him drink Duhshasana’s blood. The weapons have been consecrated. Kurukshetra is free of mud. The roads have been levelled. The soldiers have been paid. Tomorrow, together with Keshava, fight. How can you boast without encountering Bhishma in battle? That is like a foolish person who is attempting to climb Mount Gandhamadana. Drona is foremost among warriors. He is the equal of Shachi’s consort[4] in battle. O Partha! Without vanquishing him in battle, how can you hope to win back your kingdom? He is the preceptor who wields the brahma bow. He is skilled in both the Vedas.[5] He is a champion who cannot be dislodged in battle. One cannot hope to separate him from his soliders. O Partha! It is a great delusion to think that Drona can be defeated. We have never heard that Mount Meru has been overturned by the wind. Or perhaps the wind will move Meru and the sky may fall down on the earth. If what you have said is to come true, the yugas will have to be reversed now. Having encountered the terrible and deadly weapons of either of them,[6] which elephant, horse or man will be able to return home safely? How can any being that touches the ground with its feet remain alive in

the field of battle? You are like a frog that lives in its well. You do not know that an army of kings has assembled. It is invincible and is like an army of the gods. It is protected by Indras among men, like heaven is by the thirty gods. There are those from the east and the west, the south and the north. There are Kambojas, Shakas, Khasas, Shalvas, Matsyas, Kurus from the middle regions, Mlecchas, Pulindas, Dravidas, Andhras and Kanchyas. There is this extensive mass of warriors. Like the Ganga, it is incapable of being crossed. I am stationed in the midst of my army of elephants. Why are you so stupid and feeble-minded that you wish to fight with us?"'

'"Having spoken these words to Dharma's son, King Yudhishthira, Uluka turned towards Jishnu and said, 'O Arjuna! Fight without boasting. What is the need to boast so much? Success is the outcome of action. Success does not come about through boasting. O Dhananjaya! In this world, if success came about because of boasting rather than action, everyone would be successful. Even the wretched can boast a lot. I know that Vasudeva is your aide. I know that Gandiva is as tall as a palm tree. I know that there is no warrior who is your equal. Knowing all this, I took away your kingdom. Great success is not obtained because of the circle of dharma. Through his thoughts, the creator brings all beings under his control. While you lamented, I enjoyed this kingdom for thirteen years. I will rule it again for a longer time, after killing you, with your relatives. Where was your Gandiva when you were defeated at the game of dice and made a slave? O Phalguna! Where was Bhimasena's strength then? You were not saved by Bhimasena's club or Partha and his Gandiva. Without the unblemished Krishna,[7] there would have been no deliverance. It was the beautiful one who freed you from your servitude. You were then engaged in work undertaken by subhumans, tasks that are performed by slaves. I then rightly said that you were like barren sesamum seeds. Did Partha not wear a braid in Virata's city then? Kounteya Bhimasena exhausted himself as a cook in Virata's kitchen then. That showed my manliness. That is the way kshatriyas punish kshatriyas who flee from the field of battle. They are consigned to the ranks of gamblers. They are restricted to kitchens. They are made to wear braids. O Phalguna! Out of fear for Vasudeva, or out of fear for you, I will not hand over the kingdom to you. Together with Keshava, fight. Illusion, magical tricks and terrible deceptions will not frighten me. I have gathered up my weapons to do battle and they will only make me roar back in return. One thousand Vasudevas and one hundred Phalgunas may attack me. But I will use invincible arrows to drive them away in the ten directions. Go and fight with Bhishma. Break your head against a mountain. Swim across this deep ocean of men, using your arms. Sharadvata[8] is a giant fish. Vivimshati is a school of fish. Brihadbala is a giant wave. Soumadatti is a timingila.[9] Duhshasana is the flood. Shala and Shalya are the fish. Sushena and Chitrayudha are the serpentine crocodiles. Jayadratha is the mountain. Purumitra is the depth. Durmarshana is the water. Shakuni is the shore. These weapons are like flows in this ocean of warriors. You will be

immersed in it and your senses will be destroyed through exhaustion. Together with all your relatives, you will be slain. You will then grieve and lament all of this. Your mind will then turn away, like an unholy one from heaven. O Partha! You will refrain from any thoughts about ruling the earth. This kingdom will be extremely difficult for you to rule. It will be like the achievement of heaven by someone who has no austerities.'"'

822(159)

'Sanjaya said, "Uluka then again spoke many words to Arjuna, as he had been asked to do. He angered him with the stakes of his words, like a virulent serpent. On hearing his words, the Pandavas were extremely enraged. They were already angry and the son of the gambler incited them even more. They arose from their seats and flailed their arms around. They were wrathful like virulent serpents and glanced towards each other. With a drooping head, Bhimasena glanced towards Keshava. His eyes were red at the corners. He sighed like a serpent. On seeing that the son of the wind[10] was distressed and extremely enraged, Dasharha smiled and replied to the son of the gambler. 'O son of a gambler! Leave swiftly and tell Suyodhana that his words have been heard. Their intent has been understood. It shall be the way he has said. But also tell Suyodhana these words from me. "O evil-minded one! Wait for tomorrow. Be a man. O foolish one! You think that Janardana will not fight and Partha has chosen him as a charioteer. Therefore, you need not be frightened. But there will be a terrible time when I will burn down all the kings in my rage, like a flame consumes straw. However, because of Yudhishthira's instructions, I will be the charioteer of the great-souled Phalguna. He himself knows the way to fight. Even if you run away to the three worlds, even if you enter the ground, you will see Arjuna's chariot in front of you tomorrow. If you think that Bhimasena's roar amounts to nothing, you can be certain that Duhshasana's blood will be drunk. Partha, or King Yudhishthira, or Bhimasena, or the twins, do not pay the slightest attention to your contrary ramblings."'"'

823(160)

'Sanjaya said, "The bull among the Bharata lineage[11] listened to Duryodhana's words. His eyes were extremely red and he glanced at the son of the gambler. The immensely famous Gudakesha glanced towards Keshava. He grasped his large arms and spoke to the son of the gambler. 'He who relies on his own valour and challenges the enemy is said to be a man. He is not frightened and acts in accordance with his complete strength. But he who challenges enemies on the basis of the valour of others is the weakest among kshatriyas. In this world, he is among the worst of men. You[12] resort to the valour of others and think yourself to be brave. O foolish one! You are yourself a coward and you desire that others should be slain. You have consecrated the eldest among all the kings and are boastful.[13] His intelligence is directed towards welfare and

he is in control of his senses. He is immensely wise and his death is certain. O evil-minded one! We know of your intentions. You are the defiler of your lineage. You think that out of kindness, the Pandavas will not slay Gangeya. O son of Dhritarashtra! You are boasting because of his valour. But while all the archers look on, I will kill Bhishma first. You son of a gambler![14] Go to the Bharatas. Go and tell Dhritarashtra's son, Duryodhana. Tell him that Savyasachi Arjuna has said that it will be this way. There will be slaughter when the night has passed. His[15] spirit is never dejected. He is true to his word. He delighted the Kurus and in their midst said, "I will kill the Pandava soldiers and the Shalveyas. That will be my burden. I can kill everyone in the world, with the exception of Drona. You need not have any fear on account of the Pandavyas." Therefore, you regard this kingdom as already having been obtained and think that the Pandavas have lost. Filled with insolence, you do not see the disaster that confronts you. Therefore, in the first encounter, I will kill the eldest among the Kurus[16] in everyone's presence. When the sun has arisen, protect the one who speaks the truth with banners and chariots. Bhishma is your refuge. But while you look on, I will use my arrows to make him fall down from his chariot. Tomorrow, Suyodhana will know what it means to be boastful. He will see the grandfather pierced through my shower of arrows. In rage, in the midst of the assembly hall, Bhimasena spoke to the short-sighted man who is your brother, Duhshasana. He does not know about dharma. He is always full of enmity. He is evil in his intelligence. He is violent. O Suyodhana! He[17] took an oath and you will see it come true. O Suyodhana! You will soon witness the terrible fruits of pride, insolence, anger, harshness, abrasiveness, cruelty, bitter words, hatred of dharma, resort to adharma, transgression of the elders, partiality of vision and all evil deeds. O lord of men! With Vasudeva as my second, I will be enraged. O foolish one! How can you hope to remain alive or aspire to the kingdom? Bhishma and Drona will be pacified. The son of the suta will be brought down. You will then lose all hope of remaining alive, your kingdom and your sons. O Suyodhana! You will see that your brothers and your sons have been killed. When they are killed by Bhimasena, you will remember all your evil deeds. Keshava has no need to make a promise for a second time. I am telling you the truth. All of this will come true.' O king! The son of the gambler heard and remembered all these words. On obtaining leave, he left the way that he had come.

'"On returning from the Pandavas, the son of the gambler went to Dhritarashtra's son. In the assembly of the Kurus, he went and repeated everything that had been spoken. After listening to Arjuna and Keshava's words, the bull among the Bharata lineage spoke to Duhshasana, Karna and Shakuni. He ordered the king's army and the forces of the allies to be readied. Before sunrise, all the soldiers were yoked and arranged in battle formations. On Karna's instructions, messengers were sent out on chariots, camels and mares. Others went out on well-trained and extremely fast horses. On Karna's instructions, they surveyed the entire army. All the kings were instructed that everything

should be yoked before sunrise.'"

Section Fifty-Nine

Ratha-Atiratha-Samkhya Parva

This section has 231 shlokas and nine chapters.

Chapter 824(161): 12 shlokas
Chapter 825(162): 33 shlokas
Chapter 826(163): 22 shlokas
Chapter 827(164): 38 shlokas
Chapter 828(165): 27 shlokas
Chapter 829(166): 39 shlokas
Chapter 830(167): 14 shlokas
Chapter 831(168): 25 shlokas
Chapter 832(169): 21 shlokas

In increasing order of strength, rathas*, maharathas and atirathas are charioteers.* Samkhya *means count or numbers and this section is so named because these charioteers and their strengths are enumerated.*

824(161)

'Sanjaya said, "Having heard Uluka's words, Kunti's son, Yudhishthira, instructed the army to march out, with Dhrishtadyumna at the forefront. That army had the four kinds of forces—infantry, chariots, elephants and horses. It was as terrible and unshakeable as the earth itself. It was protected by Bhimasena and the others and maharathas like Arjuna. Commanded by Dhrishtadyumna, it was invincible and was as pervasive as the ocean. The great archer from Panchala,[1] unassailable in battle, was at the forefront. Dhrishtadyumna led the troops, desiring an encounter with Drona. In accordance with their strength and inclinations, he assigned the rathas.[2] The suta's son was assigned to Arjuna, Duryodhana to Bhima, Ashvatthama to Nakula, Shaibya to Kritavarma and Saindhava to Varshneya Yuyudhana.[3] In the encounter with Bhishma, he instructed Shikhandi to be at the forefront. Shakuni was assigned to Sahadeva, Shala to Chekitana, Shalya to Dhrishtaketu, Goutama[4] to Uttamouja and the five Trigartas to Droupadi's sons. He assigned Subhadra's son[5] to Vrishasena and the remaining kings, because he considered him to be superior even to Partha in battle. Having thus divided the warriors, separately and collectively, the great archer, whose complexion was like the fire, earmarked Drona as his own portion. The great archer, Dhrishtadyumna, was the commander. The intelligent one arranged battle formations in the prescribed fashion and made up his mind to do battle. He yoked the soldiers of the Pandavas in the appropriate places. He stood ready on the field of battle, for the victory of the sons of Pandu."'

'Dhritarashtra asked, "When Phalguna had sworn that he would kill Bhishma in battle, what did my evil sons, Duryodhana and the others, do? I can already see my father Gangeya killed by Partha, the firm wielder of the bow, in battle, with Vasudeva at his aide. The great archer, Bhishma, is supreme among warriors. His wisdom is infinite. What did he say when he heard the words that Partha spoke? Gangeya is greatly intelligent and valiant. He is extremely skilled. What did he do when he became the commander of the Kouravas?"'

Vaishampayana said, 'At that, Sanjaya told him everything that was said by the infinitely energetic Bhishma, the aged one among the Kurus.

'Sanjaya said, "O king! Shantanu's son, Bhishma, became the commander. He delighted Duryodhana by speaking these words to him. 'I bow down before Kumara,[6] the general who wields a spear in his hand. There is no doubt that I will be your general. I know about the tasks connected with soldiers, and in particular, about battle formations.[7] I know the tasks that should be assigned to servants and those who are not servants.[8] O great king! In marching troops out, in engaging in battle and in pacifying enemies, I am learned, as learned as Brihaspati himself. I know how to prepare the great battle formations of gods, gandharvas and humans. I will use those to confound the Pandavas. Be bereft of your anxiety. I will fight according to the right principles. I will protect your army. I will follow the sacred texts. O king! Discard the fever from your mind.'

'"Duryodhana said, 'O Gangeya! I have no fear from gods and asuras combined. O mighty-armed one! I am telling you this truthfully, not to speak of now, when you are our invincible general and Drona, tiger among men, is stationed, eager to do battle. The two of you, foremost among men, are stationed on my side. Victory will be mine. O foremost among the Kurus! It is certain that even the kingdom of the gods will not be difficult to obtain. O Kourava! But I wish to know the total number of rathas among us and among the enemy and also the atirathas. The grandfather is skilled in knowing about the enemy and about us. With all these other lords of the earth, I wish to hear this.'

'"Bhishma said, 'O Gandhari's son! O Indra among kings! O lord of the earth! Listen to the number of rathas in your own army, those who are rathas and those who are atirathas. There are many thousand, tens of thousands and millions of rathas among your soldiers, but listen to the most important ones. You are foremost among the rathas and so are all your brothers, Duhshasana and the others—one hundred together. All of you are skilled in striking with weapons and are knowledgeable about slicing and piercing. You can ride on chariots and on the shoulders of elephants. You know about fighting with clubs, swords and shields. You are skilled drivers. You can strike with weapons. You are skilled in use of weapons. You can bear burdens. In the use of arrows,

you are the students of Drona and Kripa Sharadvata. The spirited sons of Dhritarashtra have been wronged by the Pandavyas and will kill the Panchalas, who are intoxicated with battle. O foremost among the Bharatas! I myself will be your supreme commander. I will frustrate the Pandavas and pierce your enemies. But I should not speak about my own qualities. They are known to you. Kritavarma of Bhoja, supreme among the wielder of weapons, is an atiratha. There is no doubt that he will accomplish your objective in battle. He is invincible in the knowledge of weapons. He can strike from a distance. He is firm in bearing weapons. He will kill your enemies, like the great Indra against the danavas. It is my view that the great archer Shalya, the king of Madra, is an atiratha. He has always rivalled Vasudeva in battle after battle. He has forsaken his own sister's sons.[9] Shalya is a supreme ratha. In battle, he will fight with Krishna, the wielder of the chakra and the club. Like the waves of an ocean, he will flood the enemy with arrows. Bhurishrava, skilled in the use of weapons, is your well-wisher and will be engaged in your welfare. Soumadatti[10] is a great archer and is the leader of a mass of rathas. He will bring about a great reduction in the forces of the enemy. O great king! It seems to me that the king of Sindhu[11] is the equal of two rathas. O king! That supreme among rathas will fight valiantly in battle. Earlier, he was oppressed by the Pandavas at the time of Droupadi's abduction. He will remember that molestation and will fight with the enemy heroes. O king! After that, he resorted to terrible austerities. He obtained the extremely rare boon that he would fight with the Pandavas on the field of battle. In battle, this tiger among rathas will remember that enmity. O son![12] He will fight with the Pandavas, even giving up his own life, which is so difficult to abandon.'"'

826(163)

'"Bhishma said, 'It is my view that Sudakshina of Kamboja has the qualities of a single ratha. He will fight with the enemies in battle, desiring to accomplish your objectives. O supreme among kings! When this lion among rathas strives in your cause, the warriors among the Kurus will witness his valour, like that of Indra. He controls a mass of chariots that are fierce, swift and armed. O great king! These Kambojas are like a swarm of locusts. Nila, resident of Mahishmati, is clad in blue armour. The rathas under his control will rout the enemy. O king! In earlier times, he had an enmity with Sahadeva.[13] O king! O supreme among the Kurus! He will always fight in your cause. Vinda and Anuvinda of Avanti are supreme rathas. They are skilled in battle. O son![14] They are firm in their bravery and are valiant. These two tigers among men will consume the soldiers of the enemy with clubs, spikes, iron arrows and javelins that are hurled from the hand. Desiring battle, in the field of battle, they will be like the leaders of herds of elephants, sporting amidst their herds. They will roam around like the god of death. It is my view that the five brothers from Trigarta are great rathas. In Virata's city, an enmity was created between them and Partha.[15] O Indra among kings! In the

battle with the army of the Parthas, they will be like sharks[16] that stir up the billowing waves of the Ganga. O Indra among kings! They are five rathas and Satyaratha is their leader. They will remember those earlier deeds and will fight in battle. O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When he was conquering the directions, Pandavya, Bhimasena's younger brother and the one with the white horses, humiliated them. These maharathas will attack and kill the Parthas, the supreme and best among their great archers and the skilled kshatriyas. Your son Lakshmana and Duhshasana are both tigers among men. They will never retreat from the field of battle. They are young and delicate, but are spirited princes. They especially know about fighting and everything about leadership. It is my view that these two supreme rathas, tigers among rathas, are brave rathas who are devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas. They will accomplish great deeds. O great king! Dandadhara, bull among men, is equal to a single ratha. Protected by his army, he will fight when he advances into battle. O son![17] It is my view that Brihadbala, the king of Kosala, is supreme among rathas and is a ratha. He is firm in speed and valiant. He will fight in battle, causing delight among his own forces. He is a great archer and is terrible in the use of weapons. He is engaged in the welfare of the sons of Dhritarashtra. O king! Kripa Sharadvata is the leader of leaders among rathas. He will give up his own beloved life and will destroy your enemies. The preceptor Sharadvata is maharshi Goutama's son. Like Kartikeya, he was born from a clump of reeds. He is invincible. O son![18] He will be like a fire in the field of battle. He will shatter this diverse army, with different types of weapons and bows.'"'

827(164)

'"Bhisma said, 'O lord of men! Your maternal uncle Shakuni is equal to a single ratha. There is no doubt that he has brought about this enmity with the Pandavas and will fight. His unassailable soldiers do not retreat from the field of battle. They carry many kinds of strange weapons and possess the speed of the wind. Drona's son is a great archer and is superior to all archers. He is colourful in the field of battle and is a maharatha who is firm in wielding weapons. O great king! When released from his bow, his arrows are like those of the wielder of the Gandiva himself and are linked together in one continuous line. But I cannot count this brave one in the list of supreme rathas, though this greatly famous one is capable of burning up the three worlds. He has accumulated anger and energy through austerities, while he dwelled in a hermitage. And since he was generous, Drona bestowed celestial weapons on him. O bull among the Bharata lineage! O supreme among kings! But he has a single great taint and because of that, I do not regard him as a ratha or an atiratha. He loves his own life too much. This brahmana always wishes for a long life. There is no one who is equal to him in either army. On a single chariot, he is capable of slaying even the army of the gods. Through the slapping of his arms, this handsome one can cause mountains to be shattered. The

brave one has an infinite number of qualities. He is a striker and his radiance is terrible. He roams around and cannot be tolerated. He is like the god of death, with a staff in his hand. He is greatly intelligent and has the neck of a lion. He is like the angry fire that rages at the end of an era. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He is capable of pacifying what is left of this war.

"''His father is immensely energetic. Though he is aged, he is superior to those who are younger. I have no doubt that he will accomplish great deeds in the field of battle. A fire will be kindled from the force of his weapons and the soldiers will be like deadwood. This will burn down the soldiers of Pandu's sons, resolved as they are on victory. This bull among men is a leader among all the leaders of rathas. He is the son of Bharadvaja. For the sake of your welfare, he will be the performer of terrible deeds. This aged preceptor is the teacher of all those who have been consecrated.[19] He will bring about the end of the Srinjayas, but Dhananjaya is his beloved. The great archer will never kill Partha, the performer of unsullied deeds. He will remember his role as a preceptor and the blazing qualities obtained by him[20] and will never kill him. The brave one has always praised Partha's many qualities. Bharadvaja[21] looks upon him as more than his own son. On a single chariot, the powerful one can use his divine weapons to slay the gods, the gandharvas and the danavas, even when they are united in the field of battle.

"''O king! I regard Pourava, tiger among kings, as a maharatha. It is my view that he is a valiant ratha who can destroy the chariots of enemy heroes. With his own large army, he will scorch the forces of the enemy. He will burn the Panchalas down, like the one with black trails burns deadwood. The prince Satyavrata is supreme among rathas and is a maharatha. O king! He will stride amidst the enemy's forces, like time. O Indra among kings! His warriors will roam around, in diverse armour and weapons. They will roam around in battle, destroying your enemies. Karna's son, Vrishasena, is foremost among ratha and is a maharatha. He is supremely strong among strong ones and will destroy the forces of the enemy. O king! Jalasandha of Magadha is one of your supreme rathas and is greatly energetic. He is the destroyer of enemy heroes and will lay down his life in battle. He is skilled in riding on the shoulders of elephants and will fight in the battle. Or the mighty-armed one will fight from chariots and will destroy the forces of the enemy. O great king! It is my view that this bull among men is a ratha. For your sake, he will lay down his life, and that of his soldiers, in the great battle. He is a valiant warrior and is colourful in battle. O king! He will cast aside his fear and fight with the enemies.

"''O king! It is my view that Bahlika, who cannot be restrained in battle, is an atiratha. The brave one is like Vaivasvata's[22] equal in battle. He will never retreat from the field of battle. O king! Like a storm, he will always attack the enemy in battle. O great king! The general Satyavat is a maharatha. He is a charioteer who performs

extraordinary feats in war and destroys the chariots of enemies. He will never be seen to be distressed at the prospect of battle. He will astound the enemy who are arrayed in the path of his chariot. The virtuous one will perform valiant deeds. That supreme man will be the performer of extremely great exploits in your cause.

""'Alayudha is an Indra among rakshasas. He is the performer of cruel deeds and is extremely strong. O king! He will remember his earlier enmity[23] and kill the enemy. He is the supreme ratha among all the soldiers of the rakshasas. He possesses the powers of maya and, firm in his enmity, will roam around in battle.

""'The brave and powerful Bhagadatta is from Pragjyotisha. He is a skilled ratha and is foremost among those who wield a goad on an elephant. In earlier times, there was a war between him and the wielder of the Gandiva. O king! That lasted over many days and each desired to be victorious over the other. O Gandhari's son! Subsequently, because of his friendship with the chastiser of Paka,[24] he concluded an alliance with the great-souled Pandava. This king is skilled in fighting from the shoulders of elephants and he will fight in this war, like Vasava, king of the gods, on Airavata.'""

828(165)

'"Bhishma said, 'Both brothers, Achala and Vrishaka, are invincible rathas. They will destroy your enemies. They are strong. They are tigers among men. They are firm in their anger. They are ones who can strike. They are foremost among those from Gandhara. They are young and handsome. They are extremely strong. This friend of yours is always devoted to you and is always harsh about wanting war. O king! He incites you in this war with the Pandavas. Karna Vaikartana is harsh, boastful and inferior. He is your adviser, leader and friend. He is insolent and has been extremely uplifted by you. O king! He is not a full ratha. Nor is he an atiratha. Because he is always generous, he has been separated from the divine earrings he was born with. Because of Rama's curse, the words of the brahmana and because he will be separated from his implements,[25] it is my view that he is only half a ratha. When he meets Phalguna, he will not be able to escape with his life.'"

'Sanjaya said, "The mighty-armed Drona, supreme among the wielders of weapons, then spoke. 'It is exactly as you have said and there is no falsehood in this at all. In battle after battle, I have seen him retreat. Karna is generous. But he is also distracted. It is my view that he is half a ratha.' When he heard this, Radheya's eyes widened in anger. O Indra among kings! He spoke to Bhishma, lashing him with his words. 'O grandfather! As you wish, you pierce me with the arrows of your words. I am innocent, but you have hated me at every step. For Duryodhana's sake, I have tolerated all of this. You now think that I am incapable and am a coward. There is no doubt that I think that you are half a ratha. O Gangeya! I do not lie when I say that you always wish ill to the Kurus and the entire universe. But the king does not realize this. These kings are equal

in their names and deeds. Who else but you will reduce their energy just before the battle, by creating dissension among them? In describing their qualities, you are highlighting their demerits. O Kourava! Age, grey hair, wealth and relatives cannot make a kshatriya a maharatha. Kshatriyas are known to be foremost because of their strength, brahmanas are known to be foremost because of their mantras, vaishyas are known to be foremost because of their riches and shudras are known to be foremost because of their years. You have differentiated between rathas and atirathas according to your own inclinations, because of your own desires and enmity. You are deluded. O Duryodhana! O mighty-armed one! Consider this in the proper way. Discard Bhishma, whose sentiments are evil. He will bring about dissension. O king! Once there is discord within the army, it will be difficult to bring it together again. O tiger among men! This is true if the source of the army is one, it is even more so when it comes from different origins. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In this war, this division has already penetrated our warriors. He is sapping our energy, in front of our very eyes. What does the dim-witted Bhishma know about the science of rathas? I will repluse the armies of the Pandavas. When they encounter my invincible arrows, the Pandavas and the Panchalas will be dispersed in the ten directions, like bulls before a tiger. Where is the turmoil of battle and the counsel of good advice and where is the aged and evil-souled Bhishma, driven by destiny? He always boasts that he can alone fight the entire universe. With his deluded vision, he does not think that any other man exists. The sacred texts certainly say that we must listen to the aged. But it is also the view that one should not listen to the extremely old. They are like children. O tiger among kings! In an excellent fight, there is no doubt that I will kill the Pandavas alone, though the fame for this will accrue to Bhishma. O lord of men! You have appointed Bhishma your commander and the commander is credited with qualities, never the warriors. O king! I will never fight as long as Gangeya is alive. But once Bhishma has been slain, I will fight with all the maharathas.'"'

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'"Bhishma said, 'For the sake of Dhritarashtra's son, I have taken up this extremely large burden of the war, as great as the ocean. This has been thought of for many years. The time has now arrived and the body hair stands up. O one who has been born from a suta! I must not cause false dissension and that is the reason you are still alive. Jamadagni's son, Rama, did not hurt me when he released great weapons.[26] What can you do? Righteous ones do not approve of the praise of one's own might. O vile one! O defiler of your lineage! But I am telling you because you have provoked me. All the kshatriya kings gathered at the svayamvara organized by the king of Kashi. I vanquished them on a single chariot and swiftly abducted the maidens. I alone repulsed thousands of such soldiers in battle and vanquished them in battle. Once they confronted

a hated man like you, a great destruction has arrived before the Kurus. Be a man. Fight with Partha in battle, whom you seek to challenge. O extremely evil-minded one! I will watch you escape from that fight.'"

'Sanjaya said, "Then the great-minded king who was Dhritarashtra's son spoke up. 'O Gangeya! Look towards me. There is a great task that must be performed. You must first think about what is my supreme welfare. Both of you[27] will perform great deeds for me. I wish to hear about the supreme rathas among the enemy. I wish to hear about the atirathas and the leaders of masses of rathas. When it is morning and the night has passed, there will be a war.'

'"Bhishma said, 'O king! I have recounted the numbers of your rathas and atirathas and also those who are half of rathas. O king! O mighty-armed one! If you are curious, together with the lords of the earth, now listen to the names among the Pandavas, to the strengths of the Pandavas and the number of their rathas. King Pandava, Kunti's descendant, is a foremost ratha. O son![28] There is no doubt that he will rage like a fire in battle. O Indra among kings! Bhimasena has eight times the qualities of a ratha. That man is energetic and insolent and possesses the strength of ten thousand elephants. Madri's two sons, bulls among men, are both rathas. They are like the Ashvins in their beauty and energy. There is no doubt that they will remember their hardships and will roam around in the front of the army, like Rudra. All these great-souled ones are tall and are like the trunks of shala trees. They are more than a span taller than other men. All of these immensely strong sons of Pandu are capable of withstanding lions. All of them have observed brahmacharya and are extreme ascetics. Those tigers among men are modest. They are as proud of their strength as tigers. They are all superhuman in their speed, striking ability and combativeness. O bull among Bharatas! In their conquests, they have defeated all the kings of the earth. O Kourava! No man can ever withstand their weapons, clubs or arrows, or string their bows and fix their arrows. Even when they were children, all of them were superior to you in raising the club, shooting arrows, running, striking targets, eating and wrestling in the dust. Proud of their strength, like tigers, they will attack your army. They will destroy it in battle. Try to avoid the encounter with them. One by one, they can kill all the kings of the earth. O Indra among kings! You have yourself witnessed what occurred at the time of the rajasuya sacrifice. They will remember Droupadi's molestation and the harsh words at the time of the gambling match. Like death, they will roam around on the field of battle. Gudakesha's eyes are red and he has Vasudeva as an aide. O brave one! There is no ratha who is equal to him in either army, nor among gods or earlier danavas, serpents, rakshasas and yakshas, not to speak of men. I have not heard of any ratha who has been, or will be, as accomplished as the intelligent Partha. O great king! Vasudeva is the charioteer and Dhananjaya is the warrior. The bow is the divine Gandiva and the horses have the speed of the wind. The divine armour is impenetrable. The great quivers are

inexhaustible. There are the weapons of the great Indra, Rudra, Kubera, Yama and Varuna. His clubs are terrible to see. He has many weapons, with the vajra as the foremost. There were thousands of danavas who lived in Hiranyapura. He slew them on a single chariot. Where is there a ratha like him? He is enraged. He is strong. Truth is his valour. That mighty-armed one can destroy your army, while protecting his own. I can stand up to Dhananjaya, and so can the preceptor. O Indra among kings! But there is no third person, in either army. He will shower down arrows from his chariot, like the cloud at the end of the summer season, when there is a mighty storm. The accomplished Kounteya has Vasudeva as an aide. He is young and skilled. Both of us are aged and exhausted.'"

'Sanjaya said, "When the kings heard the words of Bhishma, their hearts trembled. Their sturdy arms had golden bracelets. They were anointed with sandalwood paste. In their minds, they remembered the earlier speed and strength of the Pandavyas, as if they could see them in front of their eyes."'

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'"Bhishma said, 'O great king! All the five sons of Droupadi are maharathas. It is my view that Virata's son, Uttara, is also a great ratha. O great king! Abhimanyu is the leader of leaders among rathas. He will be the equal of Partha in battle, perhaps even of Vasudeva. He is skilled and colourful in the use of weapons. He is spirited and firm in his valour. He will remember the hardships his fathers faced and display his valour. The brave Madhava Satyaki is the leader of leaders among rathas. He is the most intolerant among the Vrishni warriors. He has conquered all fear. O king! I think that Uttamouja is a great ratha and that the valiant Yudhamanyu, bull among men, is a foremost ratha. They have many thousands of chariots, elephants and horses. To bring pleasure to Kunti's son, they will fight along with the Pandavas and against your soldiers, willing to give up their lives. O Indra among kings! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O king! They will be like the fire and the wind, helping each other. The aged Virata and Drupada are invincible in battle. It is my view that those extremely valiant bulls among men are maharathas. Though they are aged in years, they are devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas. They will strive with their extreme capacity to walk the path travelled by heroes. O Indra among kings! They have an alliance with them and possess valour and strength. They follow the conduct of aryas. They are great archers. They are bound by the noose of affection. O bull among men! Because of various reasons, all mighty-armed men become brave or cowards. But these two are firm in their affection towards Partha, they are united in their purpose. O lord among men! They will act with all their strength, giving up their lives against the enemy. They each control a separate akshouhini and will strive fiercely. They will protect their relatives and perform great deeds. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They are great archers and are heroes in

this world. They will give up their own lives. While preserving their resolutions, they will perform great exploits.'"'

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'"Bhishma said, 'O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In my view, Shikhandi, the destroyer of enemy cities and the son of the king of Panchala, is a foremost ratha on Partha's side. He will fight in the battle, destroying the earlier state of affairs.[29] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He will establish his supreme fame among your soldiers. He has many soldiers, among the Panchalas and the Prabhadrakas. He will perform great deeds with his array of chariots. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Dhrishtadyumna is the overall commander of all the soldiers. O Indra among kings! It is my view that he is an atiratha. He is the student of Drona, a maharatha. He will fight in the war, destroying the enemies in battle, like the illustrious Pinaki,[30] when he is enraged at the destruction of an era. Those who love war talk about his array of chariots. They are as extensive as the ocean and are like the masses of gods in battle. O king! O Indra among kings! In my view, Dhrishtadyumna's son, Kshatradharma, is equal to half a ratha. He is young and still lacks in training. Shishupala's brave son, Dhrishtaketu, is the king of Chedi and is a maharatha. He is a great archer and has a matrimonial alliance with the Pandavas.[31] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Together with his sons, the brave lord of Chedi will perform great exploits that will be difficult even for a maharatha to accomplish. O Indra among kings! It is my view that Kshatradeva, the destroyer of enemy cities, is devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas and is a supreme ratha on the side of the Pandavas. Jayanta, Amitouja and Satyajit are maharathas. All these great-souled ones, supreme among the Panchalas, are maharathas. O son![32] They will fight in the battle, like enraged elephants. Aja and Bhoja are valiant maharathas on the Pandava side. They will strive to their utmost capacity to help the Pandavas. They are swift in the use of weapons. They are colourful in battle. They are skilled. They are firm in their valour. O Indra among kings! The five brothers from Kekaya are indomitable in war. All of them are foremost among rathas and all of them have red flags. Those with the names Kashika, Sukumara, Nila, King Suryadatta, Shankha and Madirashva are foremost among rathas and all of them possess the signs of battle. They are skilled in the use of all weapons. It is my view that all of them are great-souled. It is my view that King Chitrayudha is a supreme ratha. He adorns the field of battle and is devoted to Kiriti. Chekitana and Satyadhriti are maharathas on the Pandava side. It is my view that those two tigers among men are foremost among rathas. O Indra among kings! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! There is no doubt in my mind that Vyaghradatta and Chandrasena are foremost among rathas. O Indra among kings! Senabindu, who has the name of Krodhahanta, is a lord who is the equal of Vasudeva and Bhimasena. In the course of the battle, he will fight valiantly with your

soldiers. You should think of himself as a supreme ratha, proud in battle, and equal to Drona, Kripa and I myself. The king of Kashi is extremely swift in the use of weapons and can be prided on being a supreme ratha. He is the vanquisher of enemy cities and it is my view that he possesses the qualities of a single ratha. Drupada's young son, Satyajit, is valorous and proud in battle and is the equal of Dhrishtadyumna. He should be counted as an atiratha. He desires fame and will perform supreme deeds for the Pandavas. There is another great and brave ratha who is skilled and is devoted to the cause of the Pandavas. He is extremely brave and he is the king of Pandya. He is a great archer and is firm in wielding the bow. He is a supreme ratha on the Pandava side. O foremost among Kouravas! Both Shreniman and King Vasudana are atirathas. O scorcher of enemies! That is my view.'"'

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'"Bhishma said, 'O great king! Rochamana is a maharatha on the Pandava side. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He will fight against the enemy soldiers in this battle, like an immortal. Kuntibhoja's son, Purujit, is a great archer and is extremely strong. He is Bhimasena's maternal uncle and it is my view that he is an atiratha.[33] He is a brave and great archer, skilled and trained. He is capable of fighting in colourful ways. It is my view that he is a bull among rathas. He will fight with valour, like Maghavan[34] against the danavas. He has many famous warriors, all of whom are skilled in fighting. The brave one will fight for the sake of his sister's son. Engaged in ensuring the welfare of the sons of Pandu, the king will perform extremely great deeds. O great king! The lord of the rakshasas[35] is the son of Bhimasena and Hidimba. It is my view that he knows several things about maya and is the leader of leaders among rathas. O son![36] He loves war and will use maya to fight in the field of battle. There are brave rakshasas and advisers who follow his instructions. There are many other lords from many countries. With Vasudeva at the forefront, they have assembled for the sake of the Pandavas. O king! These are the principal ones on the side of the great-souled Pandavas—those who are, in my view, rathas, atirathas and equal to half a ratha. O king! They will lead Yudhishthira's terrible army in battle, protected by the brave Kiriti, like the great Indra himself. Those brave ones are marching against you in battle, desiring victory. I will fight against them, wishing for victory, or death in the field of battle. I will face Partha and Vasudeva together, the wielder of the chakra and the Gandiva. They are supreme men, like the sun and the moon in conjunction at the time of twilight. I will lead the rathas, together with your soldiers, against the soldiers of the sons of Pandu. I will be at the head of the battle. O king! I have recounted the foremost rathas and atirathas to you, both yours and theirs. O king! O Indra among Kouravas! I have also mentioned some who are half a ratha. There are Arjuna, Vasudeva and the other kings. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! As soon as I see them, I shall drive them

back. But I will not kill the mighty-armed Shikhandi from Panchala, when I see him with weapons raised, marching against me in battle. The world knows that in order to bring pleasure to my father, I gave up the kingdom that was due to me and adopted a vow of brahmacharya. I instated Chitrangada in the kingdom of the Kouravas and consecrated the infant Vichitravirya as the heir apparent. Among all the kings on the earth, I then became famous as Devavrata. I will never kill someone who has been born as a woman, or someone who has been a woman earlier. O king! You may have heard that Shikhandi was earlier a woman. She was born a woman and became a man later. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I will not fight with him. O bull among the Bharata lineage! O king! I will kill all the other lords of the earth, whomsoever I encounter on the field of battle, with the exception of the sons of Kunti.'''

The fifth volume will cover Sections 60 to 68 of the 100-parva classification. It will complete Udyoga Parva (the story of Amba), include Bhishma Parva, with the Bhagavad Gita, and have about half of Drona Parva of the 18-parva classification. Volume 5 thus gets into the war proper. After Bhishma's downfall, Drona is instated as the commander and Abhimanyu is killed.

The Mahabharata: Volume 5 *will be published in April 2012*.

Acknowledgements

Carving time out from one's regular schedule and work engagements to embark on such a mammoth work of translation has been difficult. The past tense should not be used, since only 40 per cent of the road has yet been traversed. Sometimes, I wish I had been born in nineteenth-century Bengal, with a benefactor funding me for doing nothing but this. But alas, the days of gentlemen of leisure are long over. The time could not be carved out from professional engagements, barring of course assorted television channels, who must have wondered why I have been so reluctant to head for their studios in the evenings. It was ascribed to health, interpreted as adverse health. It was certainly health, but not in an adverse sense. Reading the Mahabharata is good for one's mental health and is an activity to be recommended, without any statutory warnings. The time was stolen in the evenings and over weekends. The cost was therefore borne by one's immediate family, and to a lesser extent by friends. Socializing was reduced, since every dinner meant one less chapter done. The family has first claim on the debt, though I am sure it also has claim on whatever merits are due. At least Suparna does, and these volumes are therefore dedicated to her. I suspect Sirius has no claim on the merits, though he has been remarkably patient at the times when he has been curled up near my feet and I have been translating away. There is some allegory there about a dog keeping company when the Mahabharata is being read and translated.

Most people have thought I was mad, even if they never quite said that. Among those who believed and thought it was worthwhile, beyond immediate family, are M. Veerappa Moily, Ashok Desai, Pratap Bhanu Mehta and Laveesh Bhandari. And my sons, Nihshanka and Vidroha. The various reviewers of the first volume have also been extremely kind. Incidentally, I wouldn't have been able to do it without Vaman Shivram Apte. When he compiled the student's Sanskrit dictionary more than a hundred years ago in Pune, I am certain he had no idea that it would be used so comprehensively to translate the Mahabharata.

Penguin also believed. My initial hesitation about being able to deliver was brushed aside by R. Sivapriya, who pushed me after the series had been commissioned by V. Karthika. And then Sumitra Srinivasan became the editor, followed by Paloma Dutta. The enthusiasm of these ladies was so infectious that everything just snowballed and Paloma ensured that the final product of the fourth volume was much more readable than what I had initially produced.

When I first embarked on what was also a personal voyage of sorts, the end was never in sight and seemed to stretch to infinity. Now that 40 per cent is over (and 10 per cent more is in the pipeline), the horizon can be seen. And all the people mentioned above have had a role to play in this journey.

[1] Brahmana is a text and also the word used for the highest caste.
[2] A class of religious and philosophical texts that are composed in the forest, or are meant to be studied when one retires to the forest.
[3] The six Vedangas are *shiksha* (articulation and pronunciation), *chhanda* (prosody), *vyakarana* (grammar), *nirukta* (etymology), *jyotisha* (astronomy) and *kalpa* (rituals).
[4] Religion, duty.
[5] Wealth. But in general, any object of the senses.
[6] Desire.
[7] Release from the cycle of rebirth.
[9] Krishna or Krishnaa is another name for Droupadi.

[1] Virata was the name of both the kingdom and the capital, a kingdom ruled by the Matsya kings. Today, the capital, Virata or Virata-nagara, is known as Bairat and is in the Jaipur district of Rajasthan.
[2] The details have been recounted in Section 44 (Volume 3).
[3] That is, Yudhishthira.
[4] The brahmana whose kindling was robbed by a deer, the story having been told in Section 44 (Volume 3).
[5] The god Dharma.
[6] The word used is *tata*. While it means son, it is affectionately used for anyone who is younger or junior.
[7] *Nagara* means city. The city of Virata is an acceptable translation. But so is Virata-nagara, as the name of the city.
[8] Since the Pandavas will be in disguise, they will have to enter the service of King Virata.
[9] After Yudhishthira lost the two rounds of gambling, the Pandavas were banished to the forest. While they were there, Brihadashva taught Yudhishthira the skills of gambling with dice. This has been recounted in Section 32.
[10] *Vibhitaka* nuts were used as dice.
[11] Vrikodara is Bhima's name.
[12] This has been described in Section 19. Dasharha is Krishna's name.
[13] The god of rain, that is, Indra. Alternatively, *parjanya* can also be translated as a rain-cloud.
[14] This Dhritarashtra is a king of the nagas and is not to be confused with the Dhritarashtra who was Duryodhana's father. Airavata is the name of Indra's elephant.
[15] Gudakesha is Arjuna's name.
[16] Bibhatsu means the one who terrifies and is one of Arjuna's name. Because he has a bow (*dhanu*) named Gandiva, Arjuna is also known as Gandivadhanva.
[17] Indra is the one with a thousand eyes. Arjuna's residence in heaven is described in several sections, such as Section 32 (Volume 2).
[18] The Rudras and Adityas are gods. There are eleven Rudras and twelve Adityas.
[19] Arjuna was ambidextrous and was therefore known as Savyasachi.
[20] Indra.
[21] Alternatively, Brihannala.
[22] In addition to obtaining celestial weapons, Arjuna had learnt these skills in heaven.
[23] King Nala's story has been told in Section 32 (Volume 2).
[24] The word used is tata.
[25] Virata.
[26] The word used is tata.

[27] Sairandhri is a class of independent maidservants who work in the inner quarters of a palace, or as artisans in someone else's house. This is also the proper name Droupadi adopts.
[28] In this context, the sacred fire preserved in any household. Agnihotra is also a kind of sacrifice.
[29] Yudhishthira's charioteer.
[30] Panchala is Drupada's kingdom.
[31] The priest of the Pandavas.
[32] Of kings.
[33] Towards the king.
[34] Presumably, someone else's prosperity.
[35] The king.
[36] That is, one should not be bribed.
[37] The word used is tata.
[38] Droupadi.
[39] There are different rivers named Kalindi. This Kalindi is another name for the Yamuna, which flows down from the Kalinda mountain and is therefore described as Kalinda's daughter, or Kalindi.
[40] Yudhishthira.
[41] The word used is tata.
[42] A kind of tree believed to contain fire inside.
[43] All of them loosened the strings of their respective bows.
[44] The king of Saindhava is Jayadratha. Jayadratha had abducted Droupadi, the incident having been described in Section 42 (Volume 3). Once Jayadratha had been defeated, Bhimasena had used his bow to drag Jayadratha by the neck.
[45] This is a reference to Nakula.
[46] The text uses the word *dakshinachara*. The straightforward translation is that his conduct (*achara*) was honest, skilful, amiable and courteous (*dakshina*). However, in worshipping Shakti, dakshinachara refers to purer rituals that use the right hand, as opposed to use of the left hand (*vamachara*).
[47] Yudhishthira and Virata respectively.
[48] These are references to Yudhishthira.
[49] As a king.
[50] Yudhishthira.
[51] The word used is tata.
[52] Since a brahmana cannot be killed.
[53] The Himalayas.
[54] Indra.

[55] The word used is tata.
[56] Droupadi and Virata's queen respectively.
[57] Virata's wife.
[58] Sairandhris.
[59] Speech, intelligence and navel.
[60] Nose, eyes, ears, nails, breasts and neck.
[61] Soles of the feet, palms of the hand, tongue, lips and nails.
[62] The word used is *shyama*, meaning dark. Shyama is also a term for a woman who hasn't had children. While Droupadi has had children, the sense could also be that she is as beautiful as one who has not.
[63] The bimba tree has fruit that is red when ripe. Ripe bimba fruit is a standard comparison for the lips of beautiful women.
[64] Apsaras are celestial dancers who serve Indra, sometimes regarded as wives of *gandharvas*.
[65] Alambusha, Mishrakeshi, Pundarika and Malini are the names of apsaras. Indrani is Indra's consort, while Varuni is Varuna's. Tvashtra is Vishvakarma, the architect of the gods. Dhata is best translated as the creator of the worlds and Prajapati as the guardian.
[66] Droupadi, or Krishnaa, as opposed to Krishna.
[67] The goddess in question is Droupadi. *Mala* is a garland and Malini is one who collects flowers and weaves garlands.
[68] Reflecting the belief that a she-crab dies after giving birth.
[69] Gandharvas are semi-divine, celestial musicians.
[70] That is, he will be killed.
[71] The word used is tata.
[72] A yojana is a measure of distance and is between eight and nine miles.
[73] Virata's daughter, who is also being described as the goddess.
[74] Because Arjuna is in the form of a eunuch.
[75] Nakula.
[76] There is a problem of transposition here and these words should have come earlier. Nakula has already told Virata about his expertise.
[77] Referring to Yudhishthira.
[78] Virata.
[79] A maharatha is in general a mighty warrior. More specifically, a maharatha is skilled in the use of all weapons and can take on ten thousand warriors single-handedly.
[80] The text states there was a brahmana festival and it is difficult to pinpoint the brahmana part of it. So we have simply translated it as a festival of austerities. It could also mean a festival with Vedic rituals.
[81] The Kalakhanja asuras were probably the same as the Kaleyas or the Kalakeyas. They

are believed to have been descended from Vishnu.
[82] Because Bhima did not want to be detected.
[83] Famous demon killed by Indra.
[84] The wrestler's name.
[85] Vaishravana is Kubera, the lord of riches.

[1] Droupadi, Yajnasena's (Drupada's) daughter. Panchali is also Droupadi's name.
[2] The name of Virata's general. As will become clear later, Kichaka was also Sudeshna's brother.
[3] Droupadi.
[4] A lioness is the queen of deer.
[5] A suta is a charioteer. Though he was Virata's general, Kichaka was the son of a charioteer.
[6] Sudeshna was the daughter of the king of Kekaya.
[7] The sun god.
[8] Because they did not wish to be discovered.
[9] While dasyus can be translated as bandits or miscreants, they were also evil demons and a class of uncivilized tribes, the enemies of gods and men.
[10] A reference to Yudhishthira.
[11] Large tree.
[12] The king of animals is a lion and the wife is a lioness.
[13] A veena is a musical instrument. Gandhara is the third of the seven primary notes, often written as *ga*.
[14] Saindhava is Jayadratha, the king of Sindhu.
[15] The word used is *dhurta*, which has several meanings—one who is cunning, a rogue, a cheat or a swindler. But it also means gamester, which is more appropriate, since the reference is to Yudhishthira.
[16] Nishka is a general term for gold, as well as a specific golden coin. As a golden coin, a nishka had different values and was not standardized.
[17] The text uses both the words *rukma* and *hiranya*. Both mean gold. We have loosely translated the first as ornaments and the second as coins, but it is possible that some other kind of difference is intended.
[18] The sun.
[19] The daughter of Kekaya, Sudeshna, Virata's wife.
[20] Implying that Arjuna wears bracelets made of conch shells.
[21] Lady, a reference to Kunti.
[22] Literally, one who has no enemies, one of Yudhishthira's names.
[23] Lady, meaning Kunti.
[24] Nakula.
[25] Granthika is the name Nakula has assumed. *Granthi* means knot and Granthika is a reference to tying a horse's reins and saddle. *Dama* means to tame or subjugate. Hence, Damagranthi is the same as Granthika and brings in the nuance of taming and subjugating horses.
[26] This is probably a reference to waterbodies drying up during the summer and being filled later.

[27] Both Arjuna and Bhima can be addressed as Partha, because they are both sons of Pritha (Kunti).
[28] Phalguna or Phalguni is Arjuna's name.
[29] The story has been recounted in Section 33 (Volume 3).
[30] Nadayani is also written as Narayani. The husband is Mudgala. The story has not been told completely, though there is a reference in Section 33 (Volume 3).
[31] This is a reference to the Ramayana. Janaka was the king of Videha.
[32] The story has been recounted in Section 33 (Volume 3).
[33] Aryas.
[34] Yudhishthira.
[35] Virata, Kaikeyi being Sudeshna.
[36] Brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras.
[37] The Jatasura story has been recounted in Section 34 (Volume 3) and the Jayadratha story in Section 42 (Volume 3).
[38] The text says—with thighs like Rambha. A plantain tree is called *rambha*, but Rambha is also the name of a beautiful celestial apsara. So thighs like the apsara's is also an acceptable translation.
[39] The Hidimba story has been told in Section 9 (Volume 1).
[40] Vritra was a demon killed by Indra, the king of the gods.
[41] Bilva is both a tree and its fruit, the wood-apple.
[42] The wielder of the Pinaka is Shiva, Pinaka being the name of Shiva's bows. It is not obvious which of the Shiva stories this refers to.
[43] By extrapolation, Kichaka's relatives (brothers) are also being referred to as Kichakas. *Upa* means minor. Upakichaka means a minor or inferior Kichaka.
[44] The secret names the Pandavas had adopted.
[45] In his hurry, he did not look for a door, but broke down a wall and came out.
[46] *Vyama* is a measure of distance, the distance between the tips of the fingers from one hand to another, when both hands are extended outwards.
[47] Because Bhima had stretched and extended his body, he could no longer be recognized.
[48] Indra is the wielder of the vajra.
[49] So that others might not understand.
[50] An oblique reference that the Pandavas will pay attention to Droupadi's needs.
[51] The numbers don't add up. Earlier, Bhima mentioned one and a half months. Droupadi now mentions thirteen days. There might have been a corruption in the Bhima part of the text, where half a month (rather than one-and-a-half months) was intended. With this correction, the numbers add up.

[1] *Naga* means elephant and Nagapura is another name for Hastinapura. They were anxious because they hadn't been able to find the Pandavas.
[2] The Trigarta kingdom allied itself with the Kouravas and against the Pandavas. There were actually two Trigarta kingdoms, one towards the north and the other towards the west.
[3] Yudhishthira.
[4] Yudhishthira's name.
[5] Meaning Yudhishthira.
[6] Those who have obtained success. Loosely, holy men.
[7] The word used is tata.
[8] The supreme soul, brahman or *paramatman*.
[9] Bhishma.
[10] The word used is tata.
[11] The four elements of policy—conciliation, dissension, bribery and chastisement, respectively.
[12] Vaikartana is one of Karna's names.
[13] Dharmapaksha is another term for *krishnapaksha*, the dark lunar fortnight.
[14] Fragrant flowers.
[15] Sahadeva, as Tantipala.
[16] Yudhishthira.
[17] Vishalaksha hasn't been mentioned before and is probably another one of Virata's brothers.
[18] Madirashva must be another one of Virata's brothers.
[19] Of the enemy.
[20] The tips were yellow because they were made of copper.
[21] Susharma.
[22] The word used is tata.
[23] Susharma's.
[24] Susharma's.
[25] Since Kuru was a common ancestor, the Pandavas are also sometimes referred to as the Kouravas.
[26] Yudhishthira is disguised as a brahmana. He has assumed the name of Kanka, but also has the name of Vaiyaghrapadya.
[27] Ashvatthama.
[28] Indra is the wielder of the vajra.
[29] Bhuminjaya. Bhuminjaya is more commonly known by the name of Uttara. Virata had a son named Uttara and a daughter named Uttaraa, the latter being the one whom Arjuna taught. Both Uttara and Uttaraa are being written as Uttara, but the context

makes clear whether it is the son or the daughter.
[30] Bhishma.
[31] Ashvatthama.
[32] That is what the Kurus will say.
[33] The one who terrifies, one of Arjuna's names.
[34] The story has been recounted in Section 19 (Volume 2).
[35] Arjuna.
[36] The daughter Uttaraa.
[37] Earlier, Uttara's name has been given as Bhuminjaya. Here, the text refers to him as Prithivinjaya. Both *bhumi* and *prithivi* mean the earth and Bhuminjaya or Prithivinjaya mean the conqueror of the earth.
[38] Bhishma.
[39] Ashvatthama.
[40] The word used is *atatayin*. This has several meanings, murderer or assassin being one. But it can also be used for thieves, ravishers and arsonists.
[41] Indra is the lord of the gods.
[42] Nishka is a general term for gold, as well as a specific golden coin. As a golden coin, a nishka had different values and was not standardized.
[43] Lapis lazuli.
[44] Drona.
[45] Maruts are gods of the wind and Indra's companions.
[46] Indra.
[47] Shiva. The story of this encounter has been told in Section 31 (Volume 2).
[48] Kala means a small part or fraction. In addition, kala is a digit of the moon and sixteen kalas make up the entirety. Therefore, Arjuna is a small part of Karna and Duryodhana and specifically, one-sixteenth of either of them.
[49] Radha's son, Karna's name.
[50] *Trinaraja*, the king (*raja*) of grass (*trina*). Coconut, bamboo, sugarcane and palmyra are all variously referred to as the king of grass.
[51] The text translates as an animal with five nails. Specifically, it could be a tiger, a lion, an elephant, a turtle, or any other such animal.
[52] Prajapati means the lord of all beings. Since Brahma has been separately mentioned, it is not clear who is meant here. The known transition of the Gandiva is from Soma (the moon god) to Varuna, from Varuna to Agni and from Agni to Arjuna.
[53] Partha means Pritha's (Kunti's) son and Bhimasena is also Partha.
[54] Yudhishthira.
[55] The text translates as an animal with five nails. Specifically, it could be a tiger, a lion, an elephant, a turtle, or any other such animal.

[56] Arjuna.
[57] *Dhana* means riches and *jaya* means to win.
[58] *Vijaya* means victory.
[59] *Shveta* means white and *vahana* means mount.
[60] In the list of twenty-seven nakshatras, Purva Phalguni is eleventh and Uttara Phalguni is twelfth. Both are in the constellation of Leo, Uttara Phalguni being Denebola.
[61] *Kirita* means a diadem or crown and one who wears it is Kiriti.
[62] Bibhatsu means someone who terrifies. There is a bit of a contradiction, since Arjuna does perform terrible deeds in battle.
[63] Savyasachi actually means the left-handed one. Most people draw the string of the bow with the right hand. Arjuna could do this with the left hand too. Thus, he was Savyasachi. But he could do this with the right hand also and both of his hands were like right hands. Thus, he was ambidextrous.
[64] *Arjuna* means white or clear.
[65] Arjuna is Indra's son and Indra killed a demon named Paka.
[66] *Jishnu* means one who is victorious or triumphant and it is also one of Indra's names.
[67] *Krishna* means dark or black.
[68] Shiva is the wielder of the trident.
[69] Shatakratu is Indra's name and literally means the performer of one hundred sacrifices.
[70] Yudhishthira.
[71] Meaning Yudhishthira.
[72] Because the one year of disguise is over.
[73] Daruka is Vasudeva's (Krishna's) charioteer and Matali is Shakra's (Indra's).
[74] Sugriva, Sainya, Meghapushpa and Balahaka are the names of Krishna's horses.
[75] Arjuna.
[76] Because that was Uttara's.
[77] This was Arjuna's banner. Vishvakarma is the architect of the gods.
[78] The fire god Agni.
[79] Alternatively, birds in general.
[80] Addressing Duryodhana.
[81] The Trigartas.
[82] Ashvatthama.
[83] Indra wields the vajra.
[84] The sense is that soldiers wouldn't flee alive from the field of battle.
[85] Drona.
[86] The Pandavas.

[87] Indra.
[88] The text uses the word *ayushmat*, which means someone with a long life. But it is also used for someone who has been born in a noble lineage.
[89] A makara is a mythical aquatic animal, which can loosely be translated as crocodile or shark. The abode of makaras is the ocean.
[90] Adding up to thirteen. Arjuna has been thinking of the impending battle for thirteen years.
[91] Duryodhana.
[92] Karna was taught by Parashurama, Jamadagni's son.
[93] The word used is *bhalla*, which can mean some other kind of missile too.
[94] The cattle.
[95] Arjuna saved the Kurus from the gandharvas, a story told in Section 39 (Volume 3). Arjuna satisfied the fire god Agni in Khandava, a story told in Section 19 (Volume 3).
[96] This is the story of Arjuna's sojourn in heaven, recounted in Section 32 (Volume2).
[97] Recounted in Section 17 (Volume 2).
[98] As has been mentioned earlier, Krishna is one of Arjuna's names. The other Krishna in the sentence is Krishnaa or Droupadi and the reference is to her abduction by Jayadratha, recounted in Section 42 (Volume 3).
[99] Section 32 (Volume2).
[100] Samyamini means the self-restrained one, or an ascetic. It is also the name of Yama's city. However, there is no record of Arjuna having fought with Yama. Thus, it is difficult to pinpoint this.
[101] Section 39 (Volume 3).
[102] Described in Section 35 (Volume 3).
[103] The Pandavas.
[104] Goad for the elephant, *ankusha*.
[105] Indra.
[106] Drona, Duryodhana, Bhishma, Karna, Ashvatthama and Kripa.
[107] The supreme soul, brahman or paramatman.
[108] Droupadi.
[109] The sense seems to be that one was myopic and didn't allow the sandalwood tree to grow.
[110] This is a reference to Vidura's censure, described in Section 27 (Volume 2).
[111] Leaving none of us alive.
[112] Indra.
[113] Krishna's.
[114] Divine and human weapons respectively.
[115] Though spoken to Karna, Ashvatthama is indirectly addressing Duryodhana.

[116] Other than *yugas* or eras, krita, *treta*, dvapara and *kali* are also the names of the number of spots when a die is thrown. Krita is when four spots show up on top, treta is three, dvapara is two and kali is one.
[117] Antaka and Shamana are both names of Yama, the god of death.
[118] The subterranean fire, *vadava*.
[119] Drona.
[120] The five Pandavas.
[121] Ashvatthama.
[122] Ashvatthama.
[123] Drona, Ashvatthama and Kripa are brahmanas. Brahmastras are divine weapons, immensely powerful.
[124] The four Vedas stand for knowledge.
[125] Indra killed a demon named Paka.
[126] The cattle.
[127] The son of Ganga, Bhishma.
[128] A kala is a small unit of time. Its precise length varies according to the source and can be one minute, forty-eight seconds or eight seconds. A muhurta is forty-eight minutes.
[129] There is a minor misstatement in the numbers. The twelve lunar months, with their respective days, add up to 354 days and eight hours. But the solar year has 365 days and six hours. Hence, there is an excess of eleven days in every year and fifty-five days in every five years, just short of two months.
[130] There is an implicit astronomical calculation that is not obvious. If one takes the simple statement of two additional months in every five years, the text should have stated five months and fourteen or fifteen days (depending on what is being taken as the length of the lunar month). On the other hand, if one is being precise, there are an extra 143 days in thirteen years. Whatever be the length of the lunar month, this doesn't add up to five months and twelve days. For example, if the average lunar month is taken to be twenty-eight days, there are 140 days in five months and one has an excess of three days, not twelve.
[131] Duryodhana.
[132] Duryodhana.
[133] Indra has a thousand eyes.
[134] Arjuna.
[135] An unrivalled warrior, whose valour is unlimited, greater than a maharatha.
[136] Arjuna.
[137] Vikarna.
[138] An arrow tipped with the nail of a tortoise.

[139] Shatrumtapa.
[140] The word used is naga, which means tree, as well as rock or mountain. So it could also have been translated as a rock being dislodged from the top of the mountain.
[141] Arjuna.
[142] Because Karna has been defeated earlier.
[143] Celestial chariot.
[144] Kripa's.
[145] Arjuna.
[146] Kripa was descended from the Goutama lineage, since Sharadvat was Goutama's grandson.
[147] Yamaka means double, as well as restraint. So this was some kind of double turn and could have been a figure of eight.
[148] Drona, written better as Bhaaradvaja. He is Bharadvaja's son.
[149] Shukracharya, the preceptor of the demons.
[150] The preceptor of the gods.
[151] *Dhanurveda.*
[152] Drona's horses were red and Arjuna's horses were white.
[153] This is difficult to understand. It probably means that the arrows looked like beings that travel in the sky, such as birds.
[154] The arrows were released so fast that they seemed to be joined to one another.
[155] Vasava (Indra) killed a demon named Vritra.
[156] Divine weapons named after Indra, Vayu and Agni respectively.
[157] Of enemy warriors.
[158] A kimshuka is a tree with red flowers.
[159] Indra.
[160] The god of rain, Indra.
[161] Ashvatthama.
[162] Implying that the period of exile is not yet over.
[163] Arjuna's.
[164] Karna.
[165] Bhishma's standard had a golden palm.
[166] Arjuna was ambidextrous.
[167] Described in Section 35 (Volume 3).
[168] Prajapati means the lord of all beings. Since Brahma has been separately mentioned, it is not clear who is meant here.
[169] Described in Section 35 (Volume 3).
[170] More correctly, Vaaruna.
[171] Another name for Vayu.

[172] Bhishma.
[173] Arjuna.
[174] Duhshasana's.
[175] Duryodhana.
[176] The reference is to the destruction at the end of an era.
[177] Arjuna.
[178] Named after Indra.
[179] Indra's weapon (bow) is the rainbow.
[180] Bhishma was Ganga's son.
[181] The word used is *pradakshina*, which means to circle. But more specifically, it means to circle from the right.
[182] Vasava is Indra. Bali was a demon who defeated and conquered Indra, and was later vanquished by Vishnu in his *vamana* (dwarf) incarnation. However, a typo is possible, since there was a demon named Bala who was killed by Indra.
[183] Divine weapons named after Prajapati, Indra, Agni, Kubera, Varuna, Yama and Vayu respectively.
[184] Shvetavahana is Arjuna's name.
[185] The divine weapons.
[186] That is, Duryodhana pierced Arjuna.
[187] Duryodhana.
[188] Arjuna.
[189] Ajamidha was a common ancestor.
[190] The elephant.
[191] Duryodhana.
[192] Partha means son of Pritha (Kunti) and Yudhishthira, Bhima and Arjuna are all Parthas.
[193] Kings.
[194] Duryodhana means someone who it is difficult to fight with.
[195] An atiratha is greater than a maharatha. In this context, atiratha is being used for Arjuna and maharatha for Duryodhana.
[196] Duryodhana's.
[197] Sammohana is a divine weapon that causes one to lose one's senses. The god of love has five arrows and one of these is also named sammohana.
[198] Because they were unconscious. Presumably, the sammohana weapon, rather than the conch shell, made them unconscious.
[199] Virata's daughter Uttaraa.
[200] Kripa's.
[201] Duryodhana.

[202] Bhishma's own army had not lost its senses, thanks to Bhishma.
[203] Rahu is the demon who causes an eclipse. But the sun (the one with one thousand rays) emerges from the eclipse.
[204] Asked Bhishma.
[205] Heaven, earth and the nether regions.
[206] Devadatta is the name of Arjuna's conch shell.
[207] Arjuna.
[208] The critical edition skips some shlokas where Arjuna explains why Uttara should take the credit for the victory.

[1] Horses, elephants, chariots and infantry.
[2] Yudhishthira, Kanka being the name he assumed.
[3] The sister, Uttaraa.
[4] The word used is *shringara.*
[5] The sign of the *svastika*, an auspicious symbol.
[6] Sairandhri is a maidservant. Sairandhri is also the name Droupadi assumed. It is not clear whether Virata is addressing Droupadi, or some other maidservant. Since Droupadi is present, as a later incident shows, it could have been Droupadi.
[7] Yudhishthira.
[8] Virata is so delighted that he will give everything away in a fit of generosity.
[9] Kshatta has different meanings, attendant, doorkeeper, charioteer, the son of a shudra man and a kshatriya woman, the son of a female slave. Here, the reference is to the gatekeeper.
[10] Yudhishthira.
[11] Droupadi.
[12] Because of Arjuna's vow.
[13] Uttara's mother Sudeshna hailed from Kekaya. Thus, she is referred to as Kaikeyi.
[14] Drona.
[15] The Yadavas.
[16] Indra.
[17] Kripa.
[18] Karna.
[19] Arjuna.
[20] Arjuna and Prince Uttara respectively. Arjuna and Uttara decided on a plan for the Pandavas to reveal themselves.
[21] Of living in concealment for the thirteenth year.
[22] An auspicious sign.
[23] Kubera is the lord of riches.
[24] A snataka is a brahmana who has completed his period of celibate student life and is about to step into the householder stage.
[25] The story has been recounted in Section 35 (Volume 3). The word used in the text for demons is *krodhavasha*, those who are prone to anger.
[26] This has been recounted in Section 46. It was said that a gandharva had killed Kichaka.
[27] Shringara.
[28] Meaning Arjuna. This is the princess Uttaraa.
[29] In the fight with the Trigartas.
[30] A sign of affection towards someone younger or junior.

[31] Arjuna.
[32] The Kouravas.
[33] Abhimanyu's mother Subhadra was Krishna's sister.
[34] Krishna is the wielder of the chakra.
[35] Virata is addressing Yudhishthira now.
[36] Arjuna.
[37] Upaplavya was the name of a city in Virata's kingdom.
[38] The Dasharhas are the Yadavas and they lived in the Anarta region, roughly corresponding to today's Sourashtra. When the Pandavas were banished, Abhimanyu and Subhadra went to live with the Yadavas.
[39] An akshouhini is a large army and consists of 21,870 chariots, 21,870 elephants, 65,610 horses and 109,350 soldiers on foot.
[40] Drupada.
[41] For the cause of the Pandavas.
[42] Balarama is the wielder of the plough. Vanamali is one of Krishna's names.
[43] The names of various Yadavas. Yuyudhana is one of Satyaki's names. Hardikya is one of Kritavarma's names.
[44] Yudhishthira's charioteer.
[45] Virata gave Abhimanyu.
[46] The one without decay, Krishna's name.

[1] The grandfather is Shurasena. Shurasena's son was Vasudeva. Vasudeva had two wives, Devaki and Rohini. Rohini's son was Balarama, the Rama referred to in the text. Krishna (Janardana) was younger to Balarama and was Devaki's son.
[2] Drupada is the king of Panchala. Rohini's son is Balarama. The foremost among the Shinis is a reference to Satyaki. The Yadavas are referred to by different names, depending on the ancestor from whom the lineage is being drawn. They were all descended from Yadu. Further down the line, there were ancestors like Andhaka, Satvata, Vrishni, Shini and Bhoja.
[3] Pradyumna was Krishna's son, through Rukmini. Samba was Krishna's son, through Jambavati.
[4] Shakuni.
[5] The Pandavas.
[6] Yudhishthira.
[7] This is a reference to the conquest by the Pandavas, described in Section 23 (Volume 2).
[8] The Kouravas.
[9] Yudhishthira.
[10] The Kouravas.
[11] The Pandavas.
[12] The Kouravas.
[13] Balarama. Balarama is also known as Baladeva.
[14] Other than Devaki and Rohini, Vasudeva had other wives too. In different texts, the number of his wives is given as twelve, thirteen or fourteen. One of these wives was Devarakshita and Gada is Devarakshita's son. Gada's elder brother is thus Krishna.
[15] Ajatashatru is one of Yudhishthira's names, meaning one without enemies, one for whom enemies have not been born.
[16] Meaning, half of the kingdom.
[17] Dhritarashtra. Vichitravirya was Dhritarashtra's father.
[18] Shakuni.
[19] Karna.
[20] The first gambling match has been described in Section 27 (Volume 2). Balarama's statement is not quite correct. The only one who had warned Yudhishthira was Vidura.
[21] Yudhishthira's name.
[22] The messenger.
[23] Madhu is one of the ancestors of the Yadavas.
[24] Satyaki.
[25] A fine distinction is being drawn. In Section 27 (Volume 2), Yudhishthira told Vidura that he was under a vow that he would not refuse to go if summoned to a gambling match. Had that match been held in his house, while he was already gambling, that vow

would not have come in the way.

[26] As described in the critical edition, there is nothing in Section 27 (Volume 2) which suggests that there was an actual act of deceit.

[27] The Kouravas.

[28] This jumps the gun and there is an inconsistency. Thus far, the Kouravas have not claimed this and the question has not arisen.

[29] Satyaki's name.

[30] Krishna.

[31] Parshata is Drupada's name and Dhrishtadyumna is Drupada's son.

[32] Subhadra's son, Abhimanyu.

[33] The word used is atatayin and is used for someone who commits a heinous crime, like a thief, a felon, an arsonist, a murderer, or a rapist.

[34] Yudhishthira's.

[35] The word used is *karpanya* and the best translation is poverty. The sense is that Bhishma and Drona owe their living to the Kouravas. Radheya is Karna and Soubala is Shakuni.

[36] The king of Madra.

[37] The king of Chedi.

[38] The king of Magadha.

[39] The region of the Punjab.

[40] Drupada was the king of Panchala and the Somakas seem to have been synonymous with the Panchalas. However, in some places, there is a suggestion that the Somakas were a sub-branch of the Panchalas.

[41] Krishna is addressing Drupada.

[42] Before Drona arrived, Kripa was the preceptor. However, Drona and Drupada's relationships were subsequently strained.

[43] The other kings.

[44] The Pandavas.

[45] Shukra is the preceptor of the demons. Though the text says Angirasa, it should be interpreted as Angirasa's son. The sage Angirasa's son was Brihaspati, the preceptor of the gods.

[46] Pushya is the eighth nakshatra and is regarded as the most auspicious. The etymology of the word Pushya also means 'nourishing'. A muhurta is a period of forty-eight minutes and there are fifteen muhurtas during the day and fifteen muhurtas during the night. Some of these are good, while others are not. In the standard listing of these thirty muhurtas, the name 'Jaya' does not occur. Instead, some conjunctions on specific lunar days (*tithis*) signify 'Jaya' or victory. The best muhurta is 'Brahma', which occurs towards dawn, the specific time depending on the time of sunrise. However, in the standard listing of muhurtas, there is a name Pushya, which is good, but not as good as 'Brahma'.

This occurs late in the evening, the specific time depending on the time of sunrise. Therefore, the priest probably left at dawn or late in the evening.

[47] Nagasahrya is another name for Hastinapura.

[48] Krishna.

[49] Dvaraka is another name for Dvaravati.

[50] Anarta is the region the Yadavas lived in. So Dvaravati is the city of Anarta.

[51] Balarama.

[52] Balarama. Shouri means someone who is descended from Shura or Shurasena and is a name for both Balarama and Krishna.

[53] Krishna.

[54] A yojana is a measure of distance, between eight and nine miles.

[55] Indra.

[56] Shalya was Duryodhana's maternal uncle by extrapolation. Shalya's sister Madri was Pandu's wife. In a narrow sense, Shalya was the maternal uncle of Nakula and Sahadeva. In a broader sense, he was the maternal uncle of the Pandavas. He was Duryodhana's maternal uncle in an even broader sense.

[57] *Padya.*

[58] *Arghya.*

[59] Yudhishthira.

[60] The word used is tata.

[61] The Jatasura story has been recounted in Section 34 (Volume 3).

[62] Damayanti's story has been recounted in Section 32 (Volume 2).

[63] Tvashtra was an artisan, architect and builder. He is often equated with Vishvakarma, the architect of the gods.

[64] The son with the three heads, Trishira.

[65] Indra is a title, status or position. Severe austerities allow a person to assume that position and dislodge Shakra.

[66] The three worlds are heaven, earth and the nether regions. Trishira means one with three (*tri*) heads (*shira*).

[67] Bala was a demon killed by Indra.

[68] Indra's wife is Shachi.

[69] Indra killed a demon named Paka.

[70] A kapinjala is the *chataka* bird, a tittira is a partridge, a kalavimka is a sparrow.

[71] Indra.

[72] They went through their mental powers, they did not have to go physically.

[73] This, and the reference to Bali, is a reference to Vishnu's dwarf (vamana) incarnation.

[74] This is a reference to the churning of the ocean.

[75] The critical edition mentions the vajra here. Instead of 'by the vajra', other versions

say, ‘by anything that is not a weapon’. Since Indra did use the vajra, these other versions seem to be more accurate.
[76] This is *sandhya*, twilight or dusk, when demons begin to roam around.
[77] Because he had violated the agreement.
[78] Indra is the god of rains and with Indra gone, there were no rains.
[79] Referring to the rivalry between the gods.
[80] Indra’s pleasure garden.
[81] The name of a foremost gandharva.
[82] Indra’s wife, Shachi.
[83] Brihasapati was the son of Angirasa.
[84] Ahalya was the wife of the sage Goutama. Disguised as Goutama, Indra seduced her. This story is recounted in the Ramayana.
[85] Both Trishira and Vritra were the sons of a brahmana.
[86] The specific preceptor is Brihaspati, in the singular. In the plural, this is being used in a general sense.
[87] The sin was distributed over these objects. Trees, rivers, mountains and the earth are fertile. Women have presumably been included also because of the notion of fertility.
[88] The night has been personified as a goddess. The northern course is *uttarayana,* the progress of the sun to the north of the equator.
[89] Upashruti is the personification of a supernatural voice that is heard at night. Alternatively, it is a nocturnal deity who reveals the future.
[90] Shachi.
[91] Upashruti.
[92] With Upashruti.
[93] *Havya* and *kavya* respectively. Havya is oblations offered to the gods, while kavya is oblations offered to the ancestors.
[94] The list of the seven great rishis (*saptarshi*) varies. Indeed, the list is believed to change from one era to another. Identified with the constellation of the Great Bear (Ursa Majoris), the saptarshi list is Kratu, Pulaha, Pulastya, Atri, Angira, Vasishtha and Bhrigu (alternatively, Marichi). Angira is the same as Angirasa.
[95] Meaning, Nahusha has been destroyed.
[96] Agni is often described as being created from the water.
[97] The *vaishvanara* fire is the digestive fire within all beings.
[98] Agni is described as having been created in heaven, within men and from the water.
[99] Hutashana. This is one of the names of Agni, meaning one to whom oblations are made.
[100] This is a reference to the fire of destruction.
[101] Agni was created from water, so water is the fire’s womb.

[102] Since Vritra has been separately mentioned, Indra is referring to Trishira too.
[103] Share of the sacrificial offerings.
[104] Varuna.
[105] Agni doesn't get a separate share. Instead, one share of the offerings is simultaneously given to Indra and Agni.
[106] There are different lists of guardians of the world (*lokapalas*), but the common list has Indra, Yama, Kubera and Varuna.
[107] Trishira.
[108] A guest is given padya (water for washing the feet), *achamaniya* (water for washing the mouth), arghya (a gift) and a cow.
[109] The meaning is unclear. However, animals were sprinkled with water before they were sacrificed.
[110] Agastya was also among the sages who were bearing Nahusha.
[111] The mantras and the related ritual.
[112] This is being addressed to Indra.
[113] Alternatively, Angirasa.
[114] Indra bestowed the boon. The word *atharva* has various meanings. Atharva (or Atharvan) was the name of a sage and Atharva Veda (the fourth Veda) is derived from this sage. A descendant of Atharva, or someone conversant with Atharva Veda, can be addressed as Atharva. The word atharva also means wise or learned, so it could also have been an adjective for *angirasa.*
[115] The Atharva Veda belonged to a slightly different category, as compared to the Rig Veda, the Sama Veda and the Yajur Veda. This probably signifies acceptance of the Atharva Veda as a part of the ritual recitations in sacrifices.
[116] Different types of swords are mentioned—*rishti*, *karavala* and *khadga.*
[117] Kiratas are hunters who dwell in the mountainous regions. Chinas are those from China, which probably meant Tibet, rather than China proper.
[118] The name of a tree and its flowers. The flowers are colourful, but have no fragrance.
[119] Respectively identified as the Greeks and the Scythians.
[120] Because the greater army was so large.
[121] The capital of the Haihaya kings. It is identified with today's Maheshwar, in Khargone district of Madhya Pradesh.
[122] The two kings of Avanti were Vinda and Anuvinda. Avanti was eventually divided into two kingdoms. Ujjaini was the capital of northern Avanti, while Mahishmati was the capital of southern Avanti.
[123] There is an inconsistency with what comes later, in Chapter 685(22). The Kekayas were divided between the Kouravas and the Pandavas. While most of the Kekayas did fight on the side of the Kouravas, these five brothers sided with the Pandavas.
[124] That is, three more akshouhinis.

[125] Punjab.
[126] The region of Kurukshetra.
[127] Near today's Rohtak.
[128] This was the capital of northern Panchala and is in Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh.
[129] The priest.
[130] Referring to Dhritarashtra.
[131] They assumed new identities.
[132] The Pandavas.
[133] The Pandavas.
[134] Krishna's name.
[135] The argument is that the Pandavas revealed themselves before the thirteenth year was over.
[136] Section 47, the fight over the cattle.
[137] Dhritarashtra.

[1] Ajamidha was an ancestor.
[2] The Yadavas.
[3] The word used is *patanga*, which can also be translated as birds or bees. The context doesn't make it clear whether Krishna or Arjuna's arrows are being referred to, probably the latter.
[4] This has been described in Section 23 (Volume 2). The northern Kurus are distinct from those of the Kuru lineage.
[5] This has been described in Section 19 (Volume 2).
[6] Nakula and Sahadeva.
[7] Drupada was the king of Panchala and the Somakas seem to have been synonymous with the Panchalas. However, in some places, there is a suggestion that the Somakas were a sub-branch of the Panchalas. Dhrishtadyumna was Drupada's son.
[8] There is a problem with the text. This should probably be the Shalvas. But even then, there is a problem. The Shalvas were a distinct kingdom, while Virata was the king of the Matsyas.
[9] There was a battle for succession within the Kekaya family. Five brothers, who were deprived of the kingdom, fought on the side of the Pandavas. There were others who fought on the side of the Kouravas.
[10] Yudhishthira.
[11] Mlecchas are barbarians, they do not speak Sanskrit.
[12] While Krishna had several sons, this is probably a reference to Pradyumna.
[13] The text says Karushas, but Karushas and Karushakas mean the same thing. Sugriva is the name of one of Krishna's horses, Sainya being the other. The killing of Shishupala has been described in Section 26 (Volume 2).
[14] Tree with colourful flowers, but no fragrance.
[15] Pandavas.
[16] Krishna is also one of Arjuna's names.
[17] Krishna.
[18] A suta is a bard or charioteer. Sanjaya was Dhritarashtra's charioteer.
[19] The word used is tata.
[20] Referring to Dhritarashtra.
[21] The word used is tata.
[22] Yuyutsu was Dhritarashtra's son through a servant maid.
[23] Bandits, dacoits, robbers. Also used as a term for those who are outcasts.
[24] Arjuna.
[25] This is a reference to Sahadeva's conquest of the south, described in Section 23 (Volume 2). However, Section 23 (Volume 2) says Dantavakra.
[26] Described in Section 23 (Volume 2).

[27] Jaya is Arjuna's name. This is a reference to the Kouravas being captured by the gandharvas. The story has been told in Section 39 (Volume 3).
[28] The word used is tata. This means father (and son), but is also affectionately used towards anyone who is senior or older.
[29] Dhritarashtra is Yudhishthira's father in a general sense, by extension.
[30] Droupadi.
[31] Yudhishthira.
[32] The plural has been used, since all the Pandavas are being addressed.
[33] The Parshata here may refer to either Drupada or Dhrishtadyumna.
[34] Dhritarashtra.
[35] Peace.
[36] Implying that if the desires are satisfied without going to war, why should one go to war?
[37] The months Magha and Phalguna constitute the cold season.
[38] Vidura.
[39] Duryodhana.
[40] Vidura's name. The word means the son of a shudra mother and a kshatriya father.
[41] Karna.
[42] Vidura was exiled, but was placated and brought back. This has been described in Section 29 (Volume 3).
[43] The text uses the word *dvipa* or island, the sense being that Karna was not a refuge like an island.
[44] Bhishma.
[45] This chapter is particularly difficult to translate and one has to take some liberties with the text. The meanings are sometimes obscure, especially towards the first half of the chapter.
[46] Desire.
[47] Yudhishthira has performed good deeds that have earned him merits. He should not transgress those limits now.
[48] In times of calamity, something that is normally adharma, may actually turn out to be dharma.
[49] The first principle, that is, adharma sometimes adopts the guise of dharma.
[50] When the natural means of livelihood are present, and there is no calamity, non-observance of dharma and observance of adharma should both be censured. However, this doesn't apply to a calamity, when the natural means of livelihood are absent.
[51] The dharma of kshatriyas.
[52] This is probably a reference to the Chedis.
[53] Those who lived in the Dasharha region.

[54] The identification of this Babhru is unclear. There was more than one Yadava named Babhru. One of them was a contemporary and relative of Krishna's, since Babhru's wife was abducted by Shishupala. But none of these Babhrus had anything to do with Kashi.
[55] Dhritarashtra.
[56] Yudhishthira.
[57] Not other kinds of knowledge.
[58] In the other world.
[59] Indra.
[60] Brihaspati is the preceptor of the gods.
[61] The Vishvadevas.
[62] In another world.
[63] Horse sacrifice and royal sacrifice respectively. The reference is to Yudhishthira.
[64] Meaning that they would force Bhimasena to control his rage.
[65] It is better that the Pandavas fight to obtain their ancestral kingdom than fight and win another kingdom.
[66] The critical edition says *rajya* (kingdom), while other versions say raja (kings). The latter translative as 'in the midst of the kings'. Given what follows, this alternative version fits better.
[67] Duhshasana.
[68] Vidura.
[69] Duhshasana.
[70] This has been described in Section 27 (Volume 3).
[71] Karna.
[72] The sequence is not quite right. Nakula was the first of the Pandavas to be won. The question of Droupadi becoming the stake arose after the other Pandavas had also been won over.
[73] In the gambling match.
[74] The text uses the word *charana*, that is, the brahmanas are devoted to a charana. Charana means a school or branch of any of the Vedas.
[75] *Ritvijas*.
[76] The word used is tata.
[77] Drona.
[78] Invoking with mantras, releasing, countering and withdrawing.
[79] The word charana is used again.
[80] Kripa.
[81] Dhritarashtra.
[82] The word used is tata.
[83] Duhshasana and Duryodhana respectively.

[84] The word used is tata.
[85] The word used is tata.
[86] Meaning Vidura. However, because Vidura is mentioned later, this could also be a reference to Yuyutsu, Dhritarashtra's son through a vaishya wife.
[87] The word used is tata.
[88] In Section 27 (Volume 3), Chitrasena is mentioned as one of the kings who gathered to gamble. But he didn't have enough of a role to play for him to be mentioned here.
[89] The cutting part isn't clear. It must have had something to do with the dice. It is possible that this means cheating with the dice.
[90] Presumably injury meted out by the Kouravas.
[91] Somadatta's son is Bhurishrava.
[92] The word used is tata,.
[93] Dhritarashtra's.
[94] The word used is tata.
[95] The word used is tata.
[96] Karna's.
[97] Ajatashatru (Yudhishthira) had a single son through Droupadi. But between them, the Pandavas had many sons.
[98] The Pandavas had no wives there. So it could mean those who were like their wives, that is, the wives of the Kouravas. Alternatively, the word used is *bharya*. While this primarily means wife, it also means a dependent woman, such as a servant maid.
[99] The word used is tata.
[100] Probably, like daughters-in-law.
[101] The word used is tata.
[102] Meaning, visits to courtesans are brief.
[103] This could mean either Dhritarashtra or Duryodhana.
[104] The word used is tata.
[105] Shakra is Indra's name and Shakrapura is another name for Indraprastha.
[106] This could be a reference to several incidents, but probably refers to Bhishma taking the vow of celibacy.
[107] The word used is tata.
[108] One village for each of the five Pandavas.
[109] The word used is tata.
[110] Sanjaya.
[111] The word used is tata.
[112] Kuru was a common ancestor, so the Pandavas are also occasionally referred to as the Kouravas.
[113] By destiny.

[114] Karma is action, the fruits of that action and also the consequent destiny.
[115] A reference to Arjuna's visit to heaven.
[116] This is a reference to Vishnu's vamana (dwarf) incarnation. Bali was a king of the demons. To follow dharma, the generous Bali gave up the three worlds to Vishnu.
[117] That is, control the thirst for satisfying the senses.
[118] Fire.

[1] Vidura.
[2] Yudhishthira.
[3] The word used is tata.
[4] To cause injury.
[5] Right and wrong, the permanent and the transient.
[6] Intelligence.
[7] Friend, foe and those who are neutral.
[8] Sama (conciliation), dana (gifts), danda (punishment) and bheda (dissension).
[9] The five senses.
[10] This can have two possible meanings—the six vices, kama (desire), *krodha* (anger) *,* *lobha* (avarice)*,* *moha* (delusion), *mada* (pride) and *matsarya* (jealousy); or the six objectives of human existence—dharma, artha, kama, moksha, the knowledge of the world and the knowledge of the brahman.
[11] A kingdom has seven constituent parts. But this probably means the seven royal vices of women, dicing, hunting, drinking, harshness of speech, severity of punishment and misuse of wealth.
[12] The supreme brahman. The word Him is being used for ease in translation, but there is no gender bias in the text.
[13] That is, a brahmana who has not been on pilgrimages.
[14] That is, only because they are desired by other women.
[15] That is, only because they are honoured by others.
[16] Probably meaning brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaishyas.
[17] The word used is tata.
[18] Signifying excessive addiction to any of the five senses.
[19] The nine gates of the body (the abode) are two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, the mouth, the anus and the genital organ. *Kshetra* (field) is the body, while *kshetrajna* is the soul. The five witnesses are the five senses of knowledge—sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. The three pillars are probably the three qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.
[20] Sudhanva was the son of the sage Angiras and was a brahmana. The king of the asuras in question is Prahlada and his son was Virochana. Both Virochana and Sudhanva wished to marry Keshini, and Prahlada was asked to adjudicate between the two, about who was superior. Being fair, Prahlada opted for Sudhanva and not for his own son, since Sudhanva was a brahmana. The story will be told in Chapter 698(35).
[21] The word used is *jati* and we have translated it as race, rather than caste.
[22] Though not explicitly mentioned, this ends Indra's quote.
[23] Dhritarashtra's mother was Ambika.
[24] The word used is tata.
[25] The word used is tata.
[26] This refers to a king.

[27] Referring to a king.
[28] *Angara* is charcoal and a burner of charcoal (*angarakaraka*) is a common image for someone who ruins himself.
[29] The king.
[30] *Shila* is an ear of corn and one who lives off them is one without a regular occupation. He sustains himself by gathering these wherever he can find them.
[31] Because clouds bring rain.
[32] A liberty has been taken with the text here, which uses the word *kuchelata*. This translates as bad (*ku*), garment (*chelata*), and makes no sense. There could be a typo, and might actually be *suchelata*, translated as good garment. However, non-Critical versions also have *ku*. So this might be derived from the female breast (*kucha*) and *kuchelata* might be a garment used to cover the female breast. Hence, we have used the word bodice.
[33] The senses.
[34] The senses.
[35] Of slanderous speech.
[36] The critical edition excises some shlokas, leading to abruptness. A *svayamvara* was arranged for Keshini and Virochana, a descendant of Diti or a daitya, arrived there. Diti was married to Prajapati Kashyapa. Sudhanva, a brahmana, was a competing suitor. Virochana was Prahlada's son.
[37] After Sudhanva arrived in the morning, Virochana invited him to share his seat.
[38] A respectful offering made to guests or bridegrooms, consisting of honey and curds.
[39] When the husband is with another woman.
[40] The sense is that five ancestors are destroyed in heaven, or five descendants barred from heaven, and so on.
[41] Virochana's life.
[42] The word used is *samudrika*. This means a palmist, as well as someone who tells fortune by considering the signs on the body.
[43] Alternatively, a dancer.
[44] Alternatively, a bastard.
[45] The word used is tata.
[46] The sense being that one cannot work during the four months of the monsoon.
[47] Passing beyond this life.
[48] Once they are lost.
[49] Atreya, the son of the sage Atri.
[50] The enemy.
[51] Syandana is both a tree and a term for a chariot. A chariot was so named because its wheels were made from the syandana tree.

[52] The five senses and the mind.
[53] Yudhishthira.
[54] Yoga has several meanings. It also means obtaining that which one does not possess, while kshema means protecting that which one already possesses.
[55] The word used is tata.
[56] Each *manvantara* (era) is presided over by a sovereign known as Manu. It is because humans are descended from Manu that they are known as *manava*. There are fourteen manvantaras and fourteen Manus to preside over them. The present manvantara is the seventh and the Manu who presides over this is known as Vaivasvata, because he was born from the sun (Vivasvat). Svayambhuva Manu was the first Manu and he is thus named because he created himself.
[57] Meaning, another man's wife.
[58] Signifying something that is impossible.
[59] The word used is maya.
[60] After the ancestors, the gods and the guests have eaten.
[61] Dhritarashtra was Vichitravirya's son and Pratipa was an earlier ancestor.
[62] Arya.
[63] The servant should be regarded as the master's own self.
[64] The text isn't very clear and some liberties have been taken. The suggestion seems to be that one shouldn't have lending and borrowing transactions with these.
[65] A wise person has no use for these.
[66] The fire.
[67] The word used is tata.
[68] There is an imagery of the life force rising up when someone senior arrives. When one has stood up to greet the senior and has seated oneself subsequently, the life force settles down again.
[69] One who makes a living by selling knowledge.
[70] That is, they must not be sold by brahmanas.
[71] Of the kingdom. There is an abruptness to the text here. The reference is to the six royal expedients of peace, war, marching, halting, seeking shelter and duplicity.
[72] Of the king.
[73] The umbrella held above a king's head as a sign of royalty.
[74] Roots used as medicines.
[75] One who is low or inferior.
[76] The word used is tata.
[77] The word used is tata.
[78] Meaning a hunter whose hands have been smeared with blood.
[79] The prosperous relative's demerits are passed on to the relative who is oppressed.

[80] This is a reference to Parashurama, who was descended from Bhrigu. Parashurama killed his mother and also destroyed the kshatriyas.
[81] The word used is tata.
[82] Remnants of life.
[83] To poison.
[84] *Shrotriya.*
[85] This is clearly a reference to *Manu Smriti,* ascribed to Svayambhuva Manu. *Manu Smriti* is the most important of the Dharmashastra texts.
[86] The word used is *udumbara.* This has different meanings, including the name of a tree and its wood, the threshold of a house and copper. Copper seems to be the most appropriate.
[87] The word used is tata.
[88] The cycles, the ups and the downs.
[89] Alternatively, birds in general. Since dead bodies are being talked about, crows are more appropriate.
[90] The body.
[91] Alternatively, avoids food that has fallen down on the ground.
[92] The three sacrificial fires—*garhapatya, ahavaniya* and *dakshina.*
[93] The word used is varna.
[94] Yudhishthira.

[1] Yama. This entire section is somewhat obscure and difficult to translate.
[2] Are born again and again.
[3] Yama.
[4] To heaven.
[5] Rush towards the desire and fall into hell.
[6] Has no desire.
[7] Of desire.
[8] Dharma and adharma.
[9] Because a true brahmana does not have to exert himself through sacrifices.
[10] The vow of silence.
[11] Prosperity characterizes this world and runs counter to the objective of the next world.
[12] This doesn't quite fit. Perhaps one means lack of compassion.
[13] Alternatively, speaking well of themselves.
[14] The list of six continues.
[15] The four Vedas are Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda. Sometimes, the Atharva Veda is not included and there is a list of three. *Itihasa* (Ramayana, Mahabharata) and the Puranas are regarded as the fifth Veda.
[16] The brahman or the paramatman.
[17] Meaning righteous.
[18] Ancient sage from whom the Atharva Veda is traced.
[19] The brahman or the paramatman.
[20] The brahman or the paramatman.
[21] Muni means sage or hermit, with a root in *mouna* or silence.
[22] Munja is a kind of rush or grass, used to make girdles for brahmanas.
[23] The preceptor is also like a father and initiation into studies is like a second birth.
[24] The brahman or the paramatman. There is no gender in the text.
[25] Barhata *(brihati)* is a kind of metre. Rathantara is a metre that particularly occurs in the Sama Veda.
[26] The sun and the moon.
[27] This shloka is especially difficult to understand and translate.
[28] This is a reference to the horses and chariot of the sun.
[29] This is another shloka which is difficult to understand and translate. The twelve probably refers to the twelve months and the river is symbolic of life.
[30] The image probably is that one only enjoys half the fruit of actions and has to be reborn.
[31] The tree is symbolic of the brahman. The featherless birds are individual souls or atman. Originally, they are part of the brahman. But having obtained feathers or

individual characteristics, they are born as different beings.
[32] The brahman is complete. The universe is also complete and is created from the brahman. But even after the universe has been created from the brahman, the complete brahman remains.
[33] Prana is the breath of life in general. It is also divided into five separate actions of prana (exhalation), apana (downward inhalation), *vyana* (diffusion through the body), *udana* (upward inhalation) and *samana* (the breath of digestion). When inhaled apana air fills up the space left by exhaled prana air, that is called *puraka* and is one of the three components of pranayama.
[34] There is a problem with the critical edition's text here, with the word *ritvijam* being a clear typo.
[35] There would be no difference between death and immortality. Man is being compared to a swan and man has four legs or parts (waking, dreaming, sleeping, *turiya*). Turiya is the fourth state, when one perceives union between the human soul atman and the brahman. Ordinary people only perceive the first three parts and one of the legs is therefore hidden and not used. Wise ones perceive the fourth leg too and see no difference between death and immortality.
[36] The individual souls must all return to the brahman.
[37] Because they do not possess wisdom and do not realize there is no difference between existence and non-existence.
[38] For such a wise man.
[39] The Vedas are being compared to the well.
[40] Brahma.
[41] The word used is *pushkara*, meaning a blue lotus. The lotus symbolizes the heart of a being. Alternatively, pushkara also means a cage and one might mean the cages that bodies represent.

[1] Dhritarashtra.
[2] Sanjaya.
[3] Sanjaya.
[4] The word used is tata.
[5] This might mean either Dhritarashtra or Duryodhana, probably the former.
[6] The other Pandavas.
[7] This is Arjuna speaking and his words are being repeated by Sanjaya. Ajamidha was an earlier ancestor and Yudhishthira and Dhritarashtra are often referred to as Ajamidha. Arjuna means that if the kingdom is returned, those earlier crimes will be pardoned.
[8] Nakula and Sahadeva.
[9] Satyaki.
[10] This is directly addressed to Duryodhana.
[11] Yudhishthira.
[12] Yudhishthira.
[13] Droupadi's five sons.
[14] Most of the Kekayas fought on the side of the Kouravas.
[15] Shakuni. In Section 28 (Volume 2), Sahadeva had vowed to kill Shakuni.
[16] Abhimanyu. Abhimanyu was the son of Arjuna and Subhadra.
[17] The Prabhadrakas were part of the Panchala army. However, some of them were from Panchala, others were from Kamboja, but worked for the Panchala army. A few Prabhadrakas also fought on the Kourava side.
[18] Uttara.
[19] Bhishma.
[20] Drona taught Dhrishtadyumna.
[21] Dhrishtadyumna.
[22] The Panchalas.
[23] Meaning Satyaki.
[24] There is a minor inconsistency. The 'him' is Duryodhana and Arjuna is asking Sanjaya to tell Duryodhana. However, the entire segment is in the form of Arjuna's message to Duryodhana and is within quotes, so to speak.
[25] The creator.
[26] Panchajanya is the name of Krishna's conch shell, while Devadatta is the name of Arjuna's conch shell.
[27] The word used is dasyus.
[28] It is difficult to pinpoint this incident. In Section 32 (Volume 2), Indra arrived before Arjuna in the form of a brahmana. However, the choice between Indra and Krishna did not arise. In Section 19 (Volume 2), Agni also arrived in the form of a brahmana, and in

that incident, Krishna/Arjuna confronted Indra. The sense is that a passive (at the rear) Krishna is superior to an active (at the forefront) Indra. Sugriva is the name of one of Krishna's horses, Sainya being the other.

[29] Rukmini was the daughter of King Bhishmaka of Vidarbha (Bhoja). Her father wished her to marry Shishupala. But she loved Krishna and Krishna abducted her. Pradyumna was the son of Krishna and Rukmini.

[30] Rukmini's son, Pradyumna.

[31] The name is also written as Sudarshana. This Nagnajit was a king of Gandhara and had imprisoned Sudarshana and other kings. Krishna liberated them. There is yet another Nagnajit, who was king of Koshala. Krishna married his daughter Satya.

[32] Krishna defeated the king of Pandya.

[33] King Poundraka was the king of Karusha and fancied himself to be superior to Krishna. He also called himself Vasudeva. The king of Kashi (Varanasi) became Poundraka's ally and Krishna defeated and killed them both. The son of the king of Kashi was Sudakshina and he swore revenge, praying to Shiva. In the subsequent conflict, Krishna burnt down Varanasi.

[34] Ekalavya allied himself with Jarasandha and was killed by Krishna when the Yadavas fought against Jarasandha. There were several demons named Jambha and Vishnu killed one of these.

[35] Kamsa was Ugrasena's son.

[36] This story has been recounted in Section 31 (Volume 2).

[37] Shalva.

[38] Naraka was the son of the earth goddess and Vishnu in his *varaha* (boar) incarnation. He established the city of Pragjyotisha in Assam (Kamarupa). After Naraka stole Aditi's earrings, Krishna killed him and his general, Mura. Hence, Krishna is known as Murari, Mura's enemy. Pragjyotisha seems to be used both for the city and the kingdom. When it is used as a name for the kingdom, the capital is Nirmochana.

[39] Naraka.

[40] Krishna.

[41] Kripa.

[42] Mrigachakra seems to have been the circle of the nakshatras rather than the signs (rashi) of the zodiac.

[43] Though the Srinjayas, that is the Panchalas, are the allies of the Pandavas.

[44] Yudhishthira.

[45] The word used is *shaikya*. This means a metal that has been moulded or cast, though not necessarily steel.

[46] Probably peacocks.

[47] *Suparnas*.

[48] Names of divine weapons.

[49] Arjuna is addressing Sanjaya now.
[50] The side of the enemies.
[51] Shukracharya.
[52] This has been described in Section 35 (Volume 3). However, there is no mention of Jambha there. Jambha was a demon killed by Vishnu.
[53] This has been described in Section 19 (Volume 2).
[54] Arjuna.
[55] The word used is tata.
[56] Krishna is also one of Arjuna's names.
[57] The word used is tata.
[58] Parashurama. Karna studied under Parashurama, pretending to be a brahmana, and was cursed by Parashurama when the deception was found out.
[59] A kala, sixteen kalas constitute a whole.
[60] The Pandavas.
[61] Karna.
[62] This has been recounted in Section 47.
[63] This has been recounted in Section 39 (Volume 3).
[64] Drona.
[65] This has been described in Section 9 (Volume 1).
[66] This has been described in Section 42 (Volume 3).
[67] This has been described in Section 8 (Volume 1).
[68] Meaning Droupadi. This has been described in Section 33 (Volume 3).
[69] Arjuna.
[70] Purandara is Indra's name. This has been described in Section 19 (Volume 2).
[71] This has been described in Section 31 (Volume 2). Girisha (lord of the mountain) is Shiva's name.
[72] Bhishmaka's son and Rukmini's brother.
[73] This story will be told in Section 60.
[74] Satyaki.
[75] The word used is tata.
[76] The word used is tata.
[77] Shaikya.
[78] The distance between an outstretched thumb and forefinger.
[79] Because the Pandavas weren't born in Hastinapura and came there only after Pandu died.
[80] The word used is tata.
[81] The word used is tata.
[82] The word used is tata.

[83] Shaikya.
[84] *Kishku*, the length of the forearm.
[85] Jarasandha's.
[86] The word used is tata.
[87] The image is of the wheel of time.
[88] The word used is tata.
[89] Yudhishthira.
[90] Drona and Karna.
[91] The word used is tata.
[92] Krishna is one of Arjuna's names too.
[93] The word used is tata.
[94] Arjuna instructed Satyaki in the use of weapons.
[95] The word used is tata.
[96] Yudhishthira.
[97] The name of Krishna's chakra.
[98] Arjuna's standard. Arjuna has white horses.
[99] Yudhishthira.
[100] Duryodhana.
[101] The word used is tata. There is a minor inconsistency, because this entire segment is in quotes and Dhritarashtra wasn't present on the occasion. Duryodhana is recounting the conversation.
[102] Bhishma's name.
[103] Balarama.
[104] Yama's.
[105] Bhima.
[106] Bhishma.
[107] Ashvatthama's father is Drona. His mother is Kripi and his maternal uncle is Kripa. None of them had normal births, Drona being born in a wooden vessel and Kripa and Kripi being born in a clump of reeds.
[108] Parashurama.
[109] Shachi is Indra's wife. As recounted in Section 43 (Volume 3), there was no mention of Shachi.
[110] They were so named because they had taken the oath.
[111] Bhouvana or Bhoumana is Vishvakarma, the architect of the gods. Tvashta or Tvashtra is also Vishvakarma, but is mentioned here separately.
[112] The rainbow.
[113] The king of the gandharvas.
[114] Yudhishthira.

[115] Ajamidha was a common ancestor and Ajamidha is usually used for Yudhishthira and Dhritarashtra.
[116] Presumably with armour.
[117] That is, Yudhishthira. The king of Madra is Shalya.
[118] The Kekayas were divided in their allegiance in the war. These five brothers fought on the side of the Pandavas, there were other Kekayas who fought on the side of the Kouravas.
[119] Those who have taken an oath to win or die.
[120] However, earlier, Duryodhana's sons have been assigned to Bhima.
[121] Sanjaya is addressing Dhritarashtra. The son of Subala is Shakuni, who is Gandhari's brother.
[122] An unrivalled warrior, whose valour is unlimited, greater than a maharatha.
[123] Bhishma.
[124] The ocean. The word used is makara. This is a mythical aquatic animal and can loosely be translated as shark or crocodile.
[125] Yama, the god of death.
[126] Satyaki.
[127] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[128] Satyabhama.
[129] Sanjaya honoured the footstool, but did not wish to sit on it.
[130] Duryodhana.
[131] As a sign of respect.
[132] Yudhishthira.
[133] Govinda is Krishna's name. Krishnaa (Droupadi) had mentally appealed to Krishna when the Pandavas faced difficulties at the time of gambling with the dice. But Krishna could not help, because he was far away.
[134] Indra. Indra is the god of rain. Indra also killed a demon named Paka.
[135] Kartavirya Arjuna, famous king of the Haihayas. He was killed by Parashurama.
[136] Upendra is Vishnu and Krishna's name and owes its origin to Vishnu becoming Indra's younger brother in the course of the vamana (dwarf) incarnation.
[137] Parashurama.
[138] Agni was satisfied by Arjuna in Khandava and the other five gods are fathers of the five Pandavas.
[139] Indra, the king of rain.
[140] Bhishma.
[141] Dhritarashtra.
[142] Duryodhana.
[143] The text doesn't use the word brahmastra. What it says is literally translated as—the

weapon with Brahma at the forefront. However, this does mean brahmastra. Divine weapons were summoned and invoked with the use of mantras and appeared in personified form. Thus, the curse was that Karna would not be able to remember the use of the brahmastra. He was cursed because he studied under Parashurama (Rama) under the false pretence of being a brahmana.

[144] Bhishma.

[145] The serpent Ashvasena survived the conflagration in Khandava. To wreak vengeance on Arjuna, he hid himself in the tip of an arrow that Karna would use in battle.

[146] The demon Bana was the son of Bali. Bana's daughter was Usha, who was in love with Krishna's grandson Aniruddha. To bring the couple together, Krishna killed Bana. Bhoumya is the demon Naraka's name.

[147] Karna will not fight until Bhishma has fallen.

[148] Karna's promise.

[149] The word used is tata.

[150] This is being addressed to Dhritarashtra now.

[151] Arjuna.

[152] That is, without being killed.

[153] Krishna's name, the one with eyes like a lotus.

[154] Arjuna's.

[155] Jayadratha.

[156] The land of the dead.

[157] Vishnu has four arms.

[158] Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa.

[159] Through his mental powers.

[160] The supreme being, Vishnu and Krishna's name.

[161] The word used is tata.

[162] *Satya* yuga, treta yuga and dvapara yuga.

[163] Addressing Duryodhana.

[164] New in the form of Krishna.

[165] The word used is tata.

[166] *Vas* means to put on or wear, *vasu* means riches. However, all of these names have alternative derivations.

[167] *Vrishan* means a bull or a stallion.

[168] The etymological derivation is unclear. 'Ma' of Madhava seems to be derived from mouna (silence), while 'dha' is derived from *dhyana* (meditation).

[169] Vishnu killed a demon named Madhu. *Madhu* also means honey or sweetness.

[170] *Jana* means people. Janaa is also the name of a demoness killed by Krishna (Vishnu).

[171] Sattva.

[172] One with the eyes of a bull.
[173] One without birth.
[174] Dama.
[175] *Isha* is lord, while *hrishika* is happiness.
[176] The one with the large arms.
[177] *Adho*.
[178] *Nara* means men and *ayana* means path.
[179] *Purana*.
[180] Everything.
[181] Truth.
[182] The victorious one.
[183] Without an end.
[184] Go means cattle.
[185] As a messenger.
[186] Garuda was Kashyapa's son and so was Arishtanemi. Therefore, Arishtanemi was a brother to Garuda. But Arishtanemi is also used to refer to Kashyapa. Consequently, Arishtanemi here means Arishtanemi's son.

[1] Krishna. Since the text uses the word Bhagavan, we have retained it, instead of using Krishna.
[2] Meaning Dhritarashtra.
[3] Strictly speaking, that refusal hasn't happened yet.
[4] The word used is tata, affectionately used for anyone who is younger or junior, though it means son. Krishna is younger to Yudhishthira in age.
[5] It is not clear who this Shambara is. There was an asura named Shambara and there was also a King Shambara (king of hunters) who fought with King Divodasa.
[6] Mixed across varnas, miscegenation.
[7] Because the enmity remains.
[8] A relatively rare name for Krishna.
[9] The likes of Bhishma, Drona and Kripa.
[10] Dhritarashtra.
[11] The end of satya yuga.
[12] The end of dvapara yuga.
[13] Yudhishthira.
[14] Rama is Balarama. Shouri is Krishna's name.
[15] Heaven and earth.
[16] The sense being that cold and heat, hunger and thirst, can be countered through human endeavour.
[17] There are three types—destiny countering human endeavour, human endeavour countering destiny and destiny and human endeavour acting together.
[18] Yudhishthira.
[19] War and peace.
[20] This has been described in Section 47. This is a reference to that and a year cannot have passed since then. A year will have elapsed from the cattle expedition described in Section 39 (Volume 3), but that doesn't fit the context.
[21] Balarama.
[22] Droupadi.
[23] This is Yudhishthira's message to Dhritarashtra, being conveyed through Sanjaya.
[24] It is not clear how this refusal was communicated to the Pandavas.
[25] The word used is tata.
[26] In non-Critical versions, Pandavas is used here. Droupadi does mean the Pandavas. However, the Pandavas are also Kouravas, because Kuru was a common ancestor.
[27] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[28] A muhurta is forty-eight minutes. Maitra also means friendship. Maitra muhurta usually begins ninty-six minutes after sunrise. Koumuda is the month of Kartika, in October–November. Revati is the twenty-seventh nakshatra.

[29] Garuda.
[30] Vishnu bears the srivatsa mark (or curl) on his chest. This is the place where Lakshmi resides.
[31] Kunti.
[32] The first Pandava is Arjuna, while the second one is Bhima.
[33] Arjuna.
[34] Krishna's charioteer.
[35] Jamadagni's son is Parashurama. Both Parashurama and Krishna are incarnations of Vishnu.
[36] The seven great rivers (*sapta sindhu*) is not a fixed list. Since flowing eastwards is mentioned, one probably means Sindhu, Sarasvati, Vipasha (Beas), Shatadru (Sutlej), Chandrabhaga or Asikni (Chenab), Vitasta (Jhelum) and Parushni (Ravi).
[37] Texts pertaining to the care of horses.
[38] To his camp.
[39] Dhritarashtra is primarily addressing Bhishma.
[40] Addressing Duryodhana.
[41] Vidura.
[42] China, which probably meant Tibet, rather than China.
[43] With the image of the sun setting.
[44] Of the Pandavas.
[45] Krishna.
[46] Kunti.
[47] The word used is tata.
[48] Kartavirya Arjuna.
[49] Droupadi could have lived in comfort with her sons, instead of accompanying the Pandavas in their exile.
[50] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[51] Duhshasana. Someone who is not an arya, and thus ignoble.
[52] Vidura.
[53] The text does not mention this explicitly. But this is Vaishampayana speaking again.
[54] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[55] The Pandavas.
[56] Kunti was born as Pritha and was the daughter of Shura, a Yadava. Shura was also Krishna's grandfather. Shura promised his firstborn child to Kuntibhoja, who was childless, as a token of friendship. Pritha was thus reared as Kunti and was Krishna's cousin sister.
[57] *Shraddhas*.
[58] That of exacting vengeance.

[59] Death.
[60] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[61] A literal translation is that she was following the dharma of women.
[62] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[63] Balarama.
[64] Arjuna's name.
[65] Ajamidha was an ancestor of the Kouravas.
[66] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[67] Indra's.
[68] Chandala has different nuances and a chandala is not necessarily a shudra. A chandala is also of mixed parentage, with a shudra father and a brahmana mother. More generally, chandalas are outcastes, while shudras are within the caste fold.
[69] Because they were allied with Jarasandha and against the Yadavas.
[70] Owed to a friend.
[71] With water.
[72] Dhritarashtra.
[73] Gift given to a guest, also arghya.
[74] A small yellow flower of the common flax.
[75] The word used is tata.
[76] On the right path.
[77] The Pandavas.
[78] Your own sons.
[79] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[80] Parashurama.
[81] Parashurama.
[82] Arjuna is identified with Nara and Krishna with Narayana.
[83] These are the names of divine weapons, but beyond this, it is difficult to identify them. Kakudika has an etymology in 'hump' and was probably used against animals, while Shuka was named after a parrot. Naka means heaven. Akshisamtarjana hurt the eye. Santana was a weapon that was shot continuously. Nartana made people dance. Ghora means terrible, while Ajyamodaka was probably connected to Yama.
[84] Such as insects.
[85] Indra.
[86] These are Matali's thoughts.
[87] Nagas.
[88] These are Matali's words.
[89] Varuna.
[90] The word used is tata.

[91] Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.
[92] Gopati (the lord of the cows) is a term used for the sun, Indra, Krishna, Shiva and Varuna. As a son of Aditi, Varuna is also Aditya. All that is being said is that Pushkara is Varuna's eldest son and there is a suggestion that he was adopted.
[93] The text says Varuni's abode and not Varuna's abode. There is a pun. The gods are known as *suras* and sura is also a term for liquor. *Varuni* is a specific kind of liquor.
[94] By the gods.
[95] Demons.
[96] The demons won them by defeating the gods.
[97] Fire was created from the water.
[98] Varuna gave Arjuna Gandiva.
[99] The etymology is difficult to understand. Gandiva means something that is made out of the horn of a rhinoceros, which was tough and strong.
[100] Varuna has an umbrella.
[101] The centre.
[102] There are seven nether regions—*atala, vitala, sutala, rasatala, talatala, mahatala* and *patala.*
[103] The moon is named Soma. Soma is also the drink of the gods, often equated with amrita. Consequently, the moon is believed to hold amrita.
[104] Hayashira means the head (*shira*) of a horse (*haya*). The subterranean fire is in the form of a mare's head.
[105] From *patana*, meaning falling down, or cause to fall down.
[106] Airavata is Indra's elephant and arose from the waters when the ocean was churned.
[107] Shiva, meaning the lord (*pati*) of all beings (bhuta).
[108] Supratika means an elephant with a beautiful trunk.
[109] This is the egg from which everything was created.
[110] Maya is the architect of the demons, while Vishvakarma is the architect of the gods.
[111] Kubera.
[112] There is probably a typo in the critical edition's text here. It says *vedi* (altar), instead of *pada* (feet), as in the preceding shloka. As with Vishnu's feet, it should probably read Brahma's feet.
[113] Vinata's son is Garuda.
[114] The sage Kashyapa was married to Vinata.
[115] Vishnu bears the srivatsa mark (or curl) on his chest. This is the place where Lakshmi resides. Garuda is Vishnu's mount.
[116] Serpents are descended from another one of Kashyapa's wives, Kadru. Therefore, serpents are related.
[117] However, in most listings of the seven nether regions, Rasatala is in the middle and

Patala is at the bottom.
[118] The word used is *rasa*, which means juice, taste, flavour, essence. In the context of taste, the six rasas are pungent, sour, sweet, salty, bitter and acidic.
[119] Brahma's.
[120] Ilavila, or Idavida, was married to the sage Vishrava and Kubera was their son. The north is Kubera's direction.
[121] Sudha is a beverage of the gods and in this context, is distinct from amrita. Svadha is an oblation offered to the ancestors.
[122] A thousand hoods.
[123] The sage Kashyapa was married to Surasa and the serpents are descended from that line.
[124] Narada.
[125] Vinata's son is Garuda. Reduced to the five elements means killed.
[126] The word used is tata.
[127] Matali. Indra is the destroyer of Bala.
[128] Narada is addressing Aryaka.
[129] Lakshmi is Vishnu's consort, Svaha is the consort of Agni, the fire god.
[130] The word used is tata.
[131] The boon of feeding on snakes.
[132] Garuda opted to serve Vishnu. The story has been recounted in Section 1 (Volume 1).
[133] The sage Kashyapa had several wives. Garuda was descended from Vinata and Indra was descended from Aditi. Both Vinata and Aditi were Daksha's daughters.
[134] The daityas are Diti's sons. Diti was also one of Daksha's daughters and was married to Kashyapa.
[135] Vishnu is Indra's younger brother.
[136] Vishnu's.
[137] The word used is tata.
[138] This is like a metaphor. Vishnu wields the chakra, likened to the wheel of a chariot.
[139] Garuda.
[140] Vishnu's.
[141] Garuda's.
[142] Vishnu is equated with Krishna. Bhima is the son of Vayu, Arjuna of Shakra, Yudhishthira of Dharma and Nakula and Sahadeva are the sons of the two Ashvins.
[143] Duryodhana.
[144] Krishna.
[145] The implication seems to be that if a well-wisher offers good advice, he no longer remains a friend.
[146] Vishvamitra was Gadhi's son. Gadhi's grandfather was Kusha. Thus, both Vishvamitra

and Gadhi are addressed as Koushika, descended from Kusha, and Vishvamitra is sometimes also described as Koushika's (Gadhi's) son, in addition to being described as Koushika. Vishvamitra was born a kshatriya and performed austerities so that he could become a brahmana.
[147] Rice boiled in milk and honey.
[148] Dharma in the form of Vasishtha.
[149] Vishvamitra.
[150] In this context, dakshina is a fee paid by a student to his preceptor at the time of graduation. Dakshina is also the stipend paid to brahmana *s* at the time of sacrifices.
[151] Galava.
[152] Vishnu.
[153] Meaning the sun and the moon.
[154] Meaning Daksha's daughters, who were all married to Kashyapa and gave birth to different species.
[155] In addition to east, purva means first or foremost.
[156] Brahma.
[157] The word savitri means several things. It is a sacred mantra from the Rig Veda. It is also the ceremony of investiture with the sacred thread.
[158] The reference is to liquid oblations (milk, clarified butter) and the fire originated in water.
[159] Vishnu.
[160] Sacrifice enjoined by the Vedas.
[161] Dakshina means south and also means the stipend at sacrifices, or fees paid to a preceptor.
[162] The *pitris* are ancestors. *Paksha* has different meanings, one of which is a lunar fortnight. Pitripaksha is a dark lunar fortnight in August–September.
[163] The *ushmapa*s, so named because they survive on hot (*ushna*) food. Though described in the text as gods, the ushmapas are actually a subcategory of the pitris (manes or ancestors).
[164] A truti is a very small measure of time, equal to one-fourth of a kshana. Two trutis constitute a lava.
[165] The south is the direction of death.
[166] Raivata, or Revanta, is a son of the sun god and is identified with forests and hunting.
[167] Savarni Manu, the son of the sun god. While there are many stories about Yavakrita, it is difficult to pin down his son.
[168] Ravana could not be killed by the gods. Ravana was the son of the sage Pulastya.
[169] The Vaitarani River separates earth from Yama's world and etymologically, the name means something that is true salvation. Evil people have to wait to cross the river.

[170] A reference to the southern transit (*dakshinayana*) of the sun.
[171] The winter solstice begins with the nakshatra Dhanishtha.
[172] This has been described in Section 1 (Volume 1).
[173] The story has been told in Section 33 (Volume 3).
[174] Galava will eventually die, but Suparna wishes to know if Galava wants to head in that direction now.
[175] *Pashchima* means west and *pashchat* means later.
[176] The mountain over which the sun sets (*asta*).
[177] Diti performed austerities so that she would have a son who could defeat Indra. Indra ingratiated himself with Diti and in one of her weak moments, penetrated her womb and sliced up the foetus. The Maruts were born from this.
[178] Rahu.
[179] Harimedha's wife was Harini and Hari (Vishnu) was born as a son to them. Harimedha's daughter was Dhvajavati. She was asked by the sun god to remain stationed in the western sky.
[180] Beyond the winter solstice, the sun moves to uttarayana.
[181] *Uttara* means north, while *uttarana* is the act of delvering.
[182] Uma.
[183] Kubera.
[184] Ascetic community.
[185] Married to Vasishtha.
[186] Svati (Arcturus) is the fifteenth of the nakshatras.
[187] The pole star. Dhruva was Vishnu's devotee and was elevated to that position.
[188] Kubera.
[189] Vishnu's foot.
[190] Uttara means both north and superior.
[191] The word used is tata.
[192] Garuda.
[193] Aquatic animals that feed on whales (*timis*).
[194] The word used is tata.
[195] Addressing Shandili.
[196] There is probably a sense of virility, since hiranya means both gold and semen.
[197] Dhana means wealth or riches and *dharana* is to support and sustain.
[198] The twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth nakshatras, Purva Bhadrapada and Uttara Bhadrapada.
[199] Aja Ekapada is a divinity, identified with Agni, the sun and the moon. Literally, Aja Ekapada can be translated as a one-footed goat. Aja Ekapada is also the god who presides over Purva Bhadrapada.

[200] Ahi Budhnya is the god who presides over Uttara Bhadrapada. Ahi Budhnya means the serpent who lives in the deep.
[201] Of the person who has been solicited.
[202] Elephants, horses, chariots and infantry.
[203] Nose, eyes, ears, nails, breasts and neck.
[204] Other than the obvious waist, ankles, wrists and neck, it is difficult to pinpoint this number seven. It is not mentioned in any of the standard treatises.
[205] Speech, intelligence and navel.
[206] Soles of the feet, palms of the hand, tongue, lips and nails.
[207] *Chakravarti*, an universal monarch or sovereign, whose wheels (chakra) travel as far as the frontiers of the ocean.
[208] Haryashva.
[209] Not to be confused with the Pandava Bhimasena.
[210] The sun god. The name of the female consort is given second.
[211] Agni.
[212] Kubera.
[213] Ganga.
[214] Brahma.
[215] Jamadagni.
[216] There is a minor inconsistency. The king has earlier been referred to as Oushinara, meaning Ushinara's son. Here, he is being referred to as Ushinara.
[217] The other kings.
[218] This suggests that unlike the other two kings, Ushinara did possess more than two hundred such horses, but refused to part with them.
[219] Ushinara.
[220] Richika was asked by Gadhi. This has been recounted in Section 33(Volume 3).
[221] The place of piligrimage (tirtha) of horses (*ashva*).
[222] Gadhi.
[223] Six hundred already having been accounted for. The river Vitasta (Beas).
[224] Galava.
[225] Vishvamitra.
[226] The three kings and her father.
[227] Yayati.
[228] Puru and Yadu were two of Yayati's sons. The Pouravas are descended from Puru and the Yadavas from Yadu.
[229] In body.
[230] Yayati.
[231] Yayati's fall from heaven has been described in Section 7 (Volume 1).

[232] They were descended from Yayati. They were Madhavi's four sons.
[233] A trait of the gods is that they do not touch the ground with their feet.
[234] Yayati.
[235] Brahma.
[236] Dharma, artha and kama.
[237] The word used is tata.
[238] The king of Anga, Karna.
[239] The word used is tata.
[240] Bhishma.
[241] The word used is tata.
[242] The word used is tata.
[243] The word used is tata.
[244] The word used is tata.
[245] A pretty but bitter fruit, probably of the Trichosanthes variety.
[246] The word used is tata.
[247] Dharma, artha and kama.
[248] The word used is tata.
[249] The word used is tata.
[250] The word used is tata.
[251] The word used is tata.
[252] The word used is tata.
[253] The word used is tata.
[254] The word used is tata.
[255] The word used is tata.
[256] The word used is tata.
[257] Parashurama.
[258] Yoga and kshema respectively.
[259] Krishna and Arjuna.
[260] The priest of the Pandavas.
[261] Literally, the one who has given a lot of stipends, Yudhishthira.
[262] Dhritarashtra.
[263] Famous sage.
[264] The word used is tata.
[265] The deceitful one is Shakuni and the deceitful act is the gambling match.
[266] Yudhishthira.
[267] Kamsa. Ugrasena was the king of the Bhojas.
[268] Primarily addressing Dhritarashtra.
[269] Brahma.

[270] The word used is tata.
[271] Yoga and kshema respectively.
[272] Of enemies.
[273] That is, the remaining half of the kingdom and the tributes of those kings.
[274] Karna.
[275] Duryodhana.
[276] Virochana's son is Bali. Bali was eventually vanquished by Vishnu is his vamana (dwarf) incarnation.
[277] Hridika's son, that is, Kritavarma.
[278] This has been described in Section 31 (Volume 2).
[279] Demoness killed by Krishna.
[280] Krishna killed a demon named Arishta, in the form of a bull. Dhenuka was a demon in the form of an ass. Chanura was a wrestler. Some of these were sent by Kamsa to kill Krishna. There is no demon named Ashvaraja (king of the horses). However, the demon Keshi was in the form of a horse and that is probably what is meant.
[281] Demons killed by Vishnu.
[282] Hayagriva means the neck (*griva*) of a horse (haya). Hayagriva is one of Vishnu's forms and is also the name of a demon. Vishnu killed the demon Hayagriva in his form of Hayagriva.
[283] There are four guardians of the world (lokapalas). Krishna presumably manifested himself in his four-armed form.
[284] Balarama.
[285] Krishna's bow, made of horn.
[286] The name of Krishna's sword.
[287] Kunti.
[288] Krishna and Kunti respectively.
[289] Duryodhana.
[290] Brahma.
[291] The son of King Mandhata, of the Ikshvaku dynasty. Vaishravana means Vishrava's son, in this case, Kubera. Kubera offered Muchukunda the kingdom as a gift.
[292] Kali yuga.
[293] The critical edition excises a shloka here and that leads to a break in continuity. 'By contributing to the commencement of kali, an evil king suffers from great sin' and so on.
[294] Oblations to the gods and the ancestors respectively.
[295] That is for a vaishya, just as begging is for a brahmana.
[296] Sama, dana, bheda and danda respectively.
[297] The name is actually Vidura (Viduraa). However, some non-Critical versions say

Vidula and 'l' and 'r' are often interchangeable in proper names. Though the name is Vidura, we have used Vidula, so that there is no confusion with the other Vidura.
[298] This is Vidula speaking.
[299] In the sense of small.
[300] Medicinal tree, *Diospyros peregrina.* It is easily inflammable and the fruit yields a resin.
[301] The uncertain path will bring fame, but the certain path will bring ill fame.
[302] Remain alive without trying.
[303] The image is of a wrestling bout.
[304] *Uchchara,* more generally, discharge.
[305] The name of Vidula's son.
[306] Purusha means man and there is a pun on the word *pura* (city).
[307] That is, if the son is killed.
[308] Sanjaya is someone who brings about victory (jaya).
[309] One cannot identify which Shambara this is.
[310] Figuratively, from the father's household to the husband's household.
[311] The gate only allows one person to pass.
[312] Vidula's son was the king of Souvira, while Sindhu was the enemy.
[313] The enemy.
[314] Jaya means victory.
[315] The account.
[316] Indra has one thousand eyes.
[317] Krishnaa, Droupadi.
[318] Droupadi was in her period.
[319] Droupadi.
[320] Droupadi.
[321] They had gone with Krishna to meet Kunti.
[322] There is no mention earlier of Karna having accompanied Krishna.
[323] Arjuna's inexhaustible quivers.
[324] Yudhishthira's.
[325] The singular is used, which means that it is Bhishma speaking.
[326] Duryodhana.
[327] Bhishma and Drona.
[328] Yudhishthira.
[329] Arjuna had an ape on his standard.
[330] Makara is a mythical aquatic animal, translated here as shark. *Nakra* and *graha* can mean either crocodile or alligator. Both expressions occur in the text and we have translated nakra as alligator and graha as crocodile.

[331] Yudhishthira.
[332] Figuratively speaking.
[333] Kubera is Ilavila's son.
[334] Meaning Bhishma and Drona.

[1] However, this is supposed to be a secret known only to Kunti.
[2] The word used is tata.
[3] Abhimanyu.
[4] As king.
[5] After the five Pandavas.
[6] Dhoumya.
[7] Above Karna's head, as a sign of kingship.
[8] Vasushena is Karna's name.
[9] Adhiratha's wife.
[10] Yudhishthira.
[11] Literally, Indra's bow, meaning rainbow.
[12] By Yudhishthira.
[13] There are four types of officiating priests—hotar (one who recites from the Rig Veda), *udgatar* (one who recites from the Sama Veda), adhvaryu (one who recites from the Yajur Veda) and brahman (one who recites from the Atharva Veda).
[14] With the exception of sthunakarna, the others are divine weapons. Sthunakarna means thick-eared or thick-shafted.
[15] Gravastotra is an invocation when the soma juice is extracted. Gravastotra is also a priest who chants this invocation. Subhadra's son is Abhimanyu.
[16] Priest who prepares the presentations at a Sama Veda sacrifice.
[17] Subrahmanya is Kartikeya's name and the reference means an invocation to Kartikeya.
[18] Priests in charge of sacrificing animals.
[19] For straining the soma juice.
[20] *Sadasyas*.
[21] Priest who assists the adhvaryu.
[22] The performer of the sacrifice has to be accompanied by his wife.
[23] A sacrifice that is performed overnight.
[24] The word used in the text is *vaitana*. This has several meanings, but oblations (usually burnt) into the fire is most appropriate.
[25] Punashchiti is a type of sacrifice associated with the Yajur Veda. In this context, the term can also be interpreted as the second part of the sacrifice.
[26] Bhima.
[27] Dhrishtadyumna and Shikhandi respectively.
[28] In the natural course, without the glory of dying in battle.
[29] Alternatively, 'The brahmanas will speak about the battle of Mahabharata.'
[30] *Amavasya*.
[31] The text actually says Madhunishudana, which means the same thing as

Madhusudana.
[32] Saturn or Shani. Shanaischara means something that travels (*chara*) slowly (*shanai*).
[33] Rohini. Prajapati is the lord of Rohini.
[34] Mangala or Mars.
[35] Anuradha is the seventeenth nakshatra and Jyeshtha is the eighteenth. Because Mars is retrograde, it is moving from the eighteenth to the seventeenth. The lord of Anuradha is Mitra, signifying friendship. Mitra means a friend and is also the name of a god.
[36] Chitra (Spica) is the fourteenth nakshatra. The planet in question must be Mars, because Mars is the lord of Chitra.
[37] This bird is not easily identified. *Shakuna* means bird and *pushpa* means flower.
[38] A jivamjivaka is a mythical bird with two heads. Alternatively, it has the head of a human and the body of a bird.
[39] Kind of jungle crow.
[40] Duryodhana's.
[41] Rice cooked in milk.
[42] In the dream.
[43] Signifying blood.
[44] The south, the direction of Yama and death.
[45] The word used is tata.
[46] An unsatisfactory explanation to justify Sanjaya's knowledge of the secret conversation.
[47] Satyaki.
[48] Karna.
[49] Vaishampayana's account continues.
[50] Which he had taken off for the meditations.
[51] Tapana and Virochana are names of the sun god.
[52] Kunti does not mean that she is literally one-eyed. The one-eyed is probably a reference to her being partial towards her son, Karna.
[53] Balarama.
[54] There are six Vedangas—*shiksha* (articulation and pronunciation), *chhanda* (prosody), *vyakarana* (grammar), *nirukta* (etymology), *jyotisha* (astronomy) and *kalpa* (rituals). The number five is used because there are five Parthas.
[55] Another name for Hastinapura.
[56] The Pandavas.
[57] Bhishma and Drona.
[58] The word used is tata.
[59] The word used is tata.
[60] Satyavati. Satyavati was dark and was known as Kali (dark) or Gandhakali.

[61] Not be a father. This was a pledge extracted by Satyavati's father, before Satyavati married Shantanu.
[62] The Rama in question is Parashurama and the story will be told in Section 60.
[63] That is, banished Vichitravirya. The details of this are never known.
[64] Ganga's son, Bhishma.
[65] Shantanu's father.
[66] Dhritarashtra, Pandu and Vidura.
[67] The word used is tata.
[68] The word used is tata.
[69] Dhritarashtra.
[70] Dhritarashtra.
[71] The word used is tata.
[72] The word used is tata.
[73] Arjuna.
[74] Meaning Bhishma.
[75] Because there were no sons.
[76] Gandhari.
[77] Bhishma. Bhishma is Ganga's son, thus the son of the river.
[78] Bhishma.
[79] The lunar dynasty of the Kurus is descended from Soma (the moon).
[80] Shukracharya, the preceptor of the demons. Vrishaparva was the king of the demons.
[81] Yadu.
[82] The story has been recounted in Section 7 (Volume 1).
[83] Another name for Hastinapura.
[84] Puru and Yayati respectively.
[85] Devapi.
[86] Pratipa.
[87] Dhritarashtra was blind.
[88] Duryodhana.
[89] Meaning that Pushya (the eighth nakshatra) was in the ascendant.
[90] Dhritarashtra.
[91] Sama (conciliation), dana (gifts) and bheda (dissension) being the other three, danda is chastisement or punishment.

[1] This doesn't mean Drona. Drona is actually Bhaaradvaja, Bharadvaja's son. Drupada, together with Drona, studied under Bharadvaja, the father.
[2] Here, Angiras means Drona. Drona was Bharadvaja's son and Bharadvaja was descended from Angiras, Angiras was Bharadvaja's grandfather. Drona and Drupada used to be friends, before they separated.
[3] The rishi in question is Yaja. The story of Dhrishtadyumna's birth has been recounted in Section 11 (Volume 1).
[4] Parashurama. The story will be told in Section 60.
[5] Meaning Bhishma.
[6] Bhishma.
[7] Parashurama.
[8] The word used is tata.
[9] This can also be translated, and interpreted, in a different way. The universe with substance is the present one and the universe without substance is a universe from the past, or one in the future.
[10] The word used is tata.
[11] *Dhata* and *vidhata* respectively.
[12] The word used is *adhivasa*, which can also mean consecration in general.
[13] Drupada.
[14] The name of Krishna's conch shell.
[15] The final camp or cantonment in Kurukshetra.
[16] Resin and charcoal are flammable ingredients used in war.
[17] Krishna.
[18] The allies of the Pandavas.
[19] Arjuna.
[20] Kali yuga, symbolic of disaster.
[21] Presumably spare ones.
[22] *Varuthas*. These were attached to chariots to guard against collisions. These must have been spare ones too.
[23] As distinct from quivers, *upasanga* may have been a different kind of quiver.
[24] As distinct from quivers, *nishanga* may have been a different kind of quiver.
[25] *Pothika*. This is a loose translation. Pothika is anything that is used for knocking down.
[26] Something used to grasp (graha) the enemy by the hair (*kacha*) and fling away (*vikshepa*).
[27] *Vastis*.
[28] *Prasas*.
[29] Ankusha, goad for driving an elephant.

[30] Unit of the army.
[31] Senapati is used in the sense of an overall general. However, sena is also a small unit of the army and senapati has now been used in that limited commander sense, far short of an overall general.
[32] Jayadratha.

[1] Shukracharya.
[2] Garuda.
[3] Kartikeya.
[4] Bhutas.
[5] Agni.
[6] Kartikeya is the son of the fire.
[7] Ganga's son, Bhishma.
[8] Duryodhana.
[9] The Pandavas had seven akshouhinis.
[10] Satyaki.
[11] Dhrishtadyumna.
[12] Balarama's.
[13] Balarama.
[14] Pradyumna.
[15] Balarama.
[16] Bhishmaka was the king of Vidarbha and was the father of Rukmi and Rukmini. Bhishmaka wished to marry Rukmini to Shishupala. But Krishna abducted her and married her.
[17] This king of the kimpurushas was named Drona or Druma and Rukmi learnt the art of war (dhanurveda) from him. The four parts of dhanurveda can mean four types of weapons, as well as the four techniques of releasing weapons. The import of this chapter is that Vidarbha remained neutral in the war.
[18] Krishna's bow.
[19] The chastiser of Paka is Indra and Arjuna is his son.
[20] Narakasura was the son of the earth goddess (Bhumi) and ruled in Pragjyotisha. He abducted sixteen thousand women and stole Aditi's earrings. His general was Mura or Muru. Krishna defeated and slew them.
[21] Elephants, cavalry, infantry and chariots.
[22] The capital of Vidarbha, identified with Kaundinyapura in Amravati division.
[23] Located to the west of Kundina.
[24] The word used is tata.
[25] Kubera.
[26] That is, proud of his bravery, Duryodhana refused Rukmi's help.

[1] Duryodhana's message is to Yudhishthira.
[2] These words are addressed to Yudhishthira again.
[3] Uluka.
[4] Indra.
[5] The four Vedas and Dhanurveda.
[6] Bhishma and Drona.
[7] Krishnaa, that is, Droupadi.
[8] Kripa.
[9] Mythical creature that lives on whales.
[10] Bhima.
[11] Arjuna.
[12] Arjuna is addressing Duryodhana, using Uluka as a messenger.
[13] Bhishma.
[14] Arjuna is now addressing Uluka.
[15] Bhishma's.
[16] Bhishma.
[17] Bhima.

[1] Dhrishtadyumna.
[2] Ratha means chariot, as well as charioteer. As a charioteer, a ratha is a warrior. A maharatha is in general a mighty warrior. More specifically, a maharatha is skilled in the use of all weapons and can take on ten thousand warriors single-handedly. An atiratha is an unrivalled warrior, whose valour is unlimited, greater than a maharatha.
[3] Varshneya Yuyudhana is Satyaki and Saindhava is Jayadratha.
[4] Kripa.
[5] Abhimanyu.
[6] Kartikeya, the general of the gods.
[7] *Vyuhas* are battle formations or arrays for the troops and these had different structures.
[8] We have translated this as servants, but there is a nuance of the servants being paid. An alternative translation is thus of soldiers who are paid and those who are not paid, the mercenaries and the non-mercenaries respectively.
[9] Shalya was Madri's sister and Madri was the mother of Nakula and Sahadeva.
[10] Somadatta's son, Bhurishrava. Bhurishrava's father was Somadatta.
[11] Jayadratha.
[12] The word used is tata.
[13] In the course of the Pandava conquest, Sahadeva defeated Nila.
[14] The word used is tata.
[15] Arjuna defeated them.
[16] Makaras, mythical creatures.
[17] The word used is tata.
[18] The word used is tata.
[19] As kings.
[20] Arjuna.
[21] Meaning Drona, or Bhaaradvaja, Bharadvaja's son.
[22] Yama's.
[23] Because Bhima killed several rakshasas.
[24] Indra is the chastiser of Paka and Indra was Bhagadatta's friend, while Arjuna was Indra's son.
[25] Karna studied under Parashurama under the false pretence of being a brahmana. When he was discovered, Parashurama cursed him that he would not be able to remember the weapons at the time of battle.
[26] Parashurama. The story will be told in Section 60.
[27] Presumably meaning Bhishma and Karna. But it could also mean Bhishma and Drona.
[28] The word used is tata.
[29] In the earlier state of affairs, Shikhandi was a woman. The story will be recounted in

Section 60.
[30] The wielder of the pinaka, Shiva.
[31] Dhrishtaketu's sister was Karenumati and she was married to Nakula.
[32] The word used is tata.
[33] Kunti was raised by Kuntibhoja. Purujit is Kuntibhoja's son and is thus, Bhima's maternal uncle.
[34] Indra.
[35] Ghatotkacha.
[36] The word used is tata.

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